

# Walsall & Willenhall CHRONICLE

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## PLANS REVEALED FOR MCKECHNIE BRASS WORKS SITE DEVELOPMENT



A mock-up of the possible development

AMBITIOUS plans have been submitted to bulldoze the remains of a historic metal works and regenerate the site potentially creating hundreds of jobs.

The St Francis Group has applied to demolish the old McKechnie Brass factory in Middlemore Lane, Aldridge, and change the use of the site to include light industrial purposes as well as storage and distribution.

The third part of the firm's 'hybrid' bid will be to build 22,703sq m of new units bringing life back to the 14-acre plot which has been abandoned for nearly four years. McKechnie dated back more than a century moving to Walsall in 1954 but it shut down in 2013 amid debts of £3.8million causing 60 job losses.

It was thought to be the UK's last remaining factory making brass rods and copper wires for a range of products including copper alloys and padlocks. The empty site has since become a hive for trespassing and anti-social behaviour, being set on fire in a suspected arson attack last year.

Councillor Keith Sears, who represents part of the Aldridge area, said: "Initially it sounds like a good idea so long as it is retained for industry. It is exactly what this area needs. I have heard there have been problems with crime in the buildings and I would be concerned about the safety of anyone going inside."

St Francis Group, based in Aldridge, has submitted a 'masterplan'. Sketches and

mock-up designs show two large units fronting on to Middlemore Lane with an access road running between them into the middle of the scheme towards three smaller units backing on to the Daw End Branch Canal.

The developer has stated this initial application, should it be approved by Walsall Council, will be followed up by more detailed plans which would set out the exact size and layout of the buildings.

Planning documents summarise: "This scheme will be a locally important employment led development. It is therefore critical that the proposals are of the highest quality, with the site master planned so that it maximises the benefits for the occupiers, users and neighbours alike."

### PRIZES

## Neighbours win £1k in Postcode Lottery

SIX neighbours in Aldridge have won £1,000 each in the People's Postcode Lottery's daily prize draw.

The Oakley Avenue residents all play with the postcode WS9 0BT.

People's Postcode Lottery Ambassador Danyl Johnson said: "Congratulations to our Aldridge players! I hope they enjoy spending their winnings."

A minimum of 30 per cent of ticket sales goes directly to charities and players of People's Postcode Lottery have raised more than £197 million to date for good causes.

For more information about the lottery visit [www.postcodelottery.co.uk](http://www.postcodelottery.co.uk) or go to Facebook and Twitter.

### CHARITY

## Group's appeal as Ramadan begins

A HOMELESSNESS charity has appealed for support ahead of Ramadan.

From May 27 the Walsall-based As Suffa group hope to provide around 40 hot meals a day for 30 days in a row while volunteers are fasting and have appealed for additional manpower.

Charity spokesman Nadeem Ashraf, said: "We have been providing approximately 60-80 hot meals a week to people in the Walsall community who are homeless or in need of support for over three years." Visit [www.as-suffa.org](http://www.as-suffa.org) for more information.

### ROADS

## Top 10 of worst potholes in region

THE worst potholes across Staffordshire and the Black Country have been highlighted to highways authorities thanks to Chronicle readers.

We invited readers to send pictures and details of some of the trouble spots being endured by motorists on our road network.

The most damaged roads and deepest craters have been identified and passed on to local councils to prioritise. Two of the top three have been identified now for major works in the summer and repairs have been carried out on at least two others.

● Full story and top 10 – Page 4

### INSIDE

## HAPPY FAMILIES, FOR GENERATIONS



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# Chiefs stifled by red tape in bid to recruit 100 staff NURSE SHORTAGE BLAMED ON RULES

WALSALL Manor Hospital bosses have blamed 'immigration' rules for their failure to recruit dozens of nurses in the last year.

As revealed in a trust board document the Manor still needs to hire around 100 nurses – the same number that were needed in February last year as reported by the Chronicle's sister paper the Express & Star.

Chiefs will now turn to 'temporary' staff to fill the void after complications during recruitment from the Philippines meant they were unable to bring in as many new arrivals as hoped.

In the report Rachel Overfield, the director of nursing at Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, said: "Plans are in place to mitigate the risks, mainly with regard to temporary staffing solutions."

In a statement Ms Overfield added: "We are still looking to fill around 100 posts in Walsall although we have welcomed an additional 10 midwives over the last 12 months and have successfully recruited student nurses. Thirty trainee Nursing Associates, who will qualify in 2018, have started working with us and we intend to have more which will help us develop a more sustainable workforce."

### Career

"We have been overseas to the Philippines twice in the past year and have offered more than 100 posts – however due to immigration rules it takes 12 months to get nurses into the country and we can unfortunately end up with only half of those we initially recruited. Our first recruit from last June has arrived this week and is looking forward to starting her career with us."

"We have also recruited around 20 European nurses in the past year who are still with us, helping us to achieve our vision of becoming your partners for first class integrated care."

### Report by Carl Jackson

Walsall Council's former health chief, councillor Rose Martin, said: "This is a concern but I am sure the Manor will be trying everything possible to recruit nurses. It is not only vitally important for the care of patients but also to reduce the cost of agency staff. It is far better for the Manor to have full time nurses employed rather than rely on agency staff."

The reliance on agency staff has been highlighted by the trust in the same board papers. It is failing to meet its financial targets and struggling to reduce its multi-million pound deficit largely because of the 'continued overspend on agency staff'.

Last year the trust spent £10.9 million on agency staff. It says it has 'made progress' in reducing this spend but that more needs to be done.

Councillor Ian Robertson, Walsall Council's current health chief, said: "It is absolutely vital that agency spend is brought down. The spend is crippling the hospital. They are getting themselves stuck in a cycle where they cannot get the staff so they rely on agencies and then because of the high cost they cannot get their deficit down."

## On track for a successful show



Les Bird from Aldridge with his gauge 1 models at the exhibition which took place at St John's Church

HUNDREDS of model railway enthusiasts went along to an exhibition in Walsall at the weekend. It was the sixth annual display put on by Bloxwich Model Railway Club at St John's Methodist Church.

The event helped raise more than £1,000 for the venue and other good causes. John Homer, aged 60, a club member, said: "This was our sixth one and it was very well attended again."

"We had about 25 different layouts a couple of Stoke won the top prize in the end. People always seemed interested in the exhibition."

"We were getting people to come intrigued and the next minute they were buying tracks and trains."

"We had good feedback from it ranged from stunningly detailed life-like recreations complete with trackside maintenance workers, to elaborate Thomas the Tank Engine inspired designs."

The club has around 25 members and meets every Thursday between 2pm and 4.30pm at the church.

Anyone can go along regardless of the size of their collection.



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# Jailed raiders took half a torn £5 note

TWO bungling brothers escaped with just half a worthless torn five pound note when they raided a Black Country filling station, a judge heard.

The pair were ripped off when one of them made a grab for cash in the till at the same time as a quick thinking assistant - and lost the tug of war, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told. But the robbery still cost half brothers Gareth Donnelly and Barry Millward dear when they were jailed for a total of five and a half years.

Staff were immediately suspicious after the duo walked into Apple Green Services, also known as Tamebridge Services, in Bridge Street, Wednesbury on September 9, said Mr Christopher O'Gorman, prosecuting.

The woman behind the counter carried on serving other customers until the two men were the only ones left in the shop.

Millward, aged 36, was standing by the entrance and told his brother 'just buy some chocolate,' continued the prosecutor. Donnelly did as he was told and proffered a £1 coin as payment for the confectionary.

As soon as the till was opened to get his change the 35-year-old made a lunge for the cash inside, the court heard. Mr O'Gorman continued: "As he made a grab for the money the female assistant instinctively pushed it further into the till."

Then a customer who had just left the store noticed the disturbance and returned to throw a drinks can at Millward, hitting him on the head. The short changed raiders then fled with their haul of a half a five pound note, concluded Mr O'Gorman.

Both men had a long list of previous convictions, it was said. Millward's included robbery, burglary, blackmail, theft and assault. Mr Zaheer Afzal, defending, explained that the father of four had been blighted by Class A drug addiction for years.

Donnelly from Dale Terrace, Tivdale and Millward of Trafalgar Court, Birmingham New Road, Tivdale both admitted robbery and were each jailed for two and half years.

Millward received a consecutive six month sentence for breaking the terms of his bail by failing to attend a hearing of the case without reasonable excuse.

# £9m town revamp will bring 100 jobs

**A MULTI-MILLION pound development to create more than 100 jobs and transform a derelict part of Walsall town centre has been unveiled.**

Cordwell Property, which is behind the £9million scheme for Littleton Street, wants to build a new McDonalds, Travelodge hotel and cafe along the popular route opposite Tesco Extra and near Walsall College.

It is anticipated the scheme, which has been welcomed by Walsall Council, will create more than 100 jobs.

Cordwell is looking to develop derelict land opposite the entrance to the town's big Tesco and behind the back of Red Eye Jungle and T R Music.

It has said it will submit plans to Walsall Council in the coming weeks and, if approved, work will begin after summer.

Tom Wilcox from Cordwell said: "We are delighted to be progressing with this exciting scheme in Walsall. The high profile nature of the site, has continued to attract more brand names to the town which has seen vast improvements along the Littleton Street corridor.

## Rejuvenate

"All of these have helped to rejuvenate this important quarter and our scheme introducing a different leisure-based offer will only improve the area increasing business tourism spend in the town."

The planned Travelodge hotel, will have 60 beds, be five-storeys high and encompass a restaurant.

Tony O'Brien, the UK development director for Travelodge Hotels, said: "Travelodge are delighted to have exchanged contracts with Cordwell on this important, highly visible site in Walsall for a 60-bed Travelodge Hotel. Walsall was an obvious choice for our expansion in order to provide good quality, great value hotel accommodation and the new Travelodge will provide this in a great location."

Simon Neilson, the council's executive director for economy and environment, added: "The development, if approved, would make a fantastic addition to the ring road corridor - creating jobs and offering further choice in the town centre for shoppers and visitors."

## Ta-da! It's a Calamity for group's 50th



Cast members for Fabulous at 50, to commemorate the musical society's half century

A GROUP which has been treading the boards and making audiences howl with laughter for half a century is celebrating its 50th year in style.

The Aldridge Musical Comedy Society (AMCS) opened with Calamity Jane on April 27, 1967, and has been rocking the stage ever since. Last week it brought its anniversary show Fabulous at 50

to the Prince of Wales Theatre in Cannock.

The production delivers a mix of great vocal performances, breath-taking dance routines and of course good humour. It features numbers from Les Misérables, Oklahoma, All Shook Up, Oliver, Rent and many more.

Choreography has been led by Sarah Hemming and Mark Bayliss

is behind musical direction. While society chairperson Julie Lamb directed the landmark show.

She said: "I'm so proud to be celebrating the 50th anniversary of AMCS and feel very honoured to be directing such a talented group of people on this special occasion."

AMCS has a core of 30 members and are always on the lookout for more performers.

# First summit of Street's task force on homeless

THE first meeting has taken place of a task force set up by West Midlands Mayor Andy Street to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in towns and cities across the region.

The Mayor's Homelessness Task Force gathered for the first time on Friday and includes Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson and West Midlands Police Assistant Chief Constable Alex Murray.

It includes national and regional charities such as St Basil's, the Royal British Legion, SIFA Fireside, Langar Aid, Emmaus Coventry, and Dudley-based CHADD. It also features representatives from housing groups, local authorities and business organisations - including Colmore Business Improvement District - in recognition of the different solutions. The focus of the group first is to oversee a dramatic reduction in the levels of rough sleeping but with a focus on the underlying issues.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: "The message that came back from people I spoke to on the election campaign was that they want the Mayor to tackle the issue of rough sleeping. Frankly, it's a situation that shames us as a region."

"Reflecting on the meeting, it is clear there is already lots of brilliant work, notably from the charity sector. However, there is also a clear need for co-ordination. This is about everybody working together, using the resources we have and securing new resources, to solve the challenge. There is real enthusiasm for a concerted and co-ordinated approach to this and I am encouraged by the early progress we have made."

Among the ideas being suggested is an alternative giving system to enable members of the public to donate to organisations tackling rough sleeping.

# Get an idea for Father's Day

GIFT ideas for Father's Day will be on the table at a fundraising event taking place at a Walsall church on Saturday.

Table hire for the event at the Burrows Street premises is £5 or £7 and must be booked in advance for this event only on 07821 684579 or email [mendit@gbc.org.uk](mailto:mendit@gbc.org.uk)

Proceeds will go to the church's award winning Mend-It Project which provides activities for residents including sewing, English speaking classes, fun days and health drop-ins.

# Ramblers set to head for the hills

THE Walsall Group of the Ramblers head for Clent Hills for a seven-mile circular walk on Sunday. This is a hilly walk with good views but may be muddy

Non-members are always welcome and can contact the walk leaders on 07915 525 361. For information, log onto [www.ramblers.org.uk/walsall](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/walsall)



# Victory in battle for post office litter bins

A BATTLE to get litter bins outside Darlaston Post Office is over – with the bins set to be installed by the end of the month.

Residents and area councillor Doug James have long been lobbying Walsall Council to get litter bins installed outside the town's post office and have now been told they will be put in place before May 31.

The site is one of the busiest venues in Darlaston but has never had litter bins in front, resulting in rubbish piling up at times.

The installation of the bins comes after a petition was handed in to council bosses asking that they be put in place.

Prabdal Singh Badhan, who runs the post office, said he was delighted with the success of the petition.

He said: "We want to help keep our town tidy and we are delighted that Walsall Council is supporting local business too."

Councillor Doug James, who led the petition and campaign, has previously said that GS3 litter enforcement teams who work on behalf of the council to battle littering in Walsall are rarely seen in the Darlaston area, with a greater focus put on the town centre.

Councillor James said: "This has been a long story. The owner of the post office came to me in desperation with the lack of support he had received from others. We have both turned it around by working together and its great news for everyone at Darlaston Post Office."

# Praise for school in 'good' rating

A SCHOOL'S latest performance rating has been praised by a town councillor. Darlaston's Grace Academy was recently given a 'good' rating by Ofsted after an inspection in April.

Ofsted rated the academy as 'good' in all aspects of school life including leadership and management, quality of teaching and learning, the personal development and behaviour of students, and student outcomes.

Councillor Doug James said: "This is a significant step forward for the academy. I am delighted with all the efforts from principal Carl Salt and his staff. I have supported Grace Academy through presentation events, encouraging links with our primary schools and encouraging local parents to become involved."

# Head to church for fun day out

A FREE community fun day will be held St Thomas' Church in Aldridge, with bouncy castles, face painting and stalls. St John Ambulance will do life-saving demos. The event on June 10 runs from 11am until 4pm.

# Wendy in recruitment call for nurses



Senior nurse at the Manor, Wendy Lear

SHE dreamed of becoming a nurse aged four after being inspired by the Nurse Nancy character in the Twinkle comic. Now she directs dozens of them at Walsall Manor Hospital and is throwing her weight behind a campaign to encourage others to go into the profession.

Wendy Lear trained in Sandwell and came to work as a matron in Walsall in 2003. Now the 44-year-old mother-of-two is divisional director of nursing at Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust going above and beyond her childhood ambition.

She said: "I'd seen the Nurse Nancy character in Twinkle comics and always said that's what I wanted to do – there's even a photo of me somewhere dressed as nurse with a cat as my patient. I was always adamant that it was the career for me and so it has been."

"I have been lucky enough to attend the Florence Nightingale Commemoration Service at Westminster Abbey and it's an opportunity for everyone to reflect and ask: 'Why am I a nurse?'"

"I believe that every one of us associated with nursing gets out of bed

every day wanting to do our best, wanting to help people and wanting to support our own colleagues.

"There are times when things go wrong but our motivation comes from this desire to make things right."

Earlier this month Wendy opened up about her career path as part of Nurses Day – an international celebration to mark their contribution to society and encourage others to take up the occupation. She added: "I qualified at the age of 21 and was in charge of a ward – what a responsibility for someone so young."

# Death crash accused 'went through lights'

A VAN driver struck and killed a teenager as she walked over a pedestrian crossing "in plain view" and with the traffic lights on red, a court heard.

Neel Balu was behind the wheel of a Mercedes Sprinter van when it hit 17-year-old Zoe Shapiro and threw her through the air at 37mph, said Mr Simon Davis, prosecuting.

The opening of Balu's trial heard Zoe was carried by the van for nearly nine metres (30 ft) before coming to rest 23m (75 ft) from where the crash took place in Birmingham Road, Great Barr, on February 24, 2016. The Q3 Academy student suffered traumatic head and neck injuries and passed away less than two hours later.

Balu, aged 42, of nearby Woodside Close, had admitted causing death by careless driving but denies causing death by dangerous driving.

Mr Davis, opening at Birmingham Crown Court on Monday, said: "Balu struck Zoe when we say she was in plain view, three to four steps away from the pavement on the central reservation. She was around 1.6m from safety when the defendant's van struck her and killer her."

## Witnesses

"The light was on red for the defendant," Mr Davis said the crash took place around 8.30am as Balu was driving from his home to Handsworth. He said witnesses would state Balu was driving around 50mph and that they saw no brake lights come on the van ahead of it hitting Zoe. Balu regularly drove on the road, added Mr Davis. "He failed to spot not one but four traffic light posts indicating red against him," said Mr Davis.

"For upwards of 110m (361ft) he failed to spot Zoe on the crossing when she was there to be seen and was seen by other road users. He failed to brake as he struck Zoe supporting his suggestion he failed to spot the lights were on red and he failed to spot Zoe."

The court heard in police interview Balu said he had been blinded by the sun and did not know he had hit Zoe until he got out of the van and looked back down the road.

The trial continues.

## Five generations mark milestone



Edith Howes, aged 93, from Harrowby Place, Willenhall, with daughter Margaret, 70, granddaughter Debbie, 46, great granddaughter Chloe, 24 and great grandson Harley Daniel, aged just four days

IT was a day to remember for one Walsall family as five generations got together to mark the arrival of a new-born baby.

Edith Howes, aged 93, welcomed her daughter Margaret Hollinshead, 70, granddaughter Debbie Roberts, 46, great granddaughter Chloe Freeman, 24 and great great grandson Harley Daniel, four days, into her home on Harrowby Place. It marks a significant milestone for the family, who can now proudly boast they will have five generations living at the same time.

Debbie Roberts, Edith's granddaughter, said: "We all live in the Willenhall area so we are always in touch with each other. I am delighted that Nan got to see Harley, he has already been to see her twice in just a couple of days. She loves children and they get on really well."

"We all love Harley and although he doesn't understand how amazing it is that he is one of five generations of our family that are alive today, we hope he will have great memories from these times in the future."

Edith has live in Harrowby Place all of her married life, giving birth to and raising nine children across two marriages while living at the house. Her family now includes 23 grandchildren, 42 great grandchildren and Harley, her great great grandchild.

Granddaughter Debbie said: "When you think about how many of us there is, it is quite amazing really." And there's another on the way, Debbie said: "My eldest daughter is expecting my second grandchild in September, so I can't wait for that."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Wembley honour for the Saddlers



The Wembley arch in Saddlers colours

IT was arguably the most historic day in Walsall Football Club's existence.

Now the day the club took thousands of supports to Wembley for the first ever time has been recognised as part of the stadium's 10th anniversary celebrations.

The iconic arch over the national stadium, which opened in 2007, was lit up in Saddler's red and black while large screens on the outside of the stands showed the club's crest as well as the message 'For Walsall'.

Wembley is marking the landmark occasion by doing the same for all 166 teams, including domestic, European, International men's and women's sides to have graced the turf since it opened. The Saddlers famously visited in March 2015 in the Johnstone's Paint Trophy final, unfortunately going down 2-0 to Bristol City.

## Micro pub set to boost town centre

PLANS to build a new micro pub in Walsall town centre are being recommended for approval.

The plans, submitted by Kim Langford, will see a new craft ale micro pub built at unit 73 on the St Matthews Quarter, George Street.

A statement attached to the application reads: "Our clients have identified the growing trend for micro pubs and this vacant retail unit meets their criteria. The unit is located in an area that is now being redeveloped and the addition of a micro pub would enhance the area and breathe life into George Street."

## Musical night of Cash in hand at Robin

A JOHNNY Cash cover band will play at an iconic rock venue next month.

Keep it Cash will be performing at the Robin 2 in Bilston on June 29. The band features Dave Burnham, whose voice has been recorded for both television and radio as a sound-a-like of Johnny Cash.

Tickets for the show cost £15 in advance or £16 on the door, with doors opening at 7.30pm. To buy tickets call the venue's box office on 01902 401211 or visit therobin.co.uk

## Dementia summit

HEALTH and support organisations across Walsall came together to unite against dementia. The gathering at Walsall Manor Hospital, including Pathways 4 Life, also presented an opportunity for discussions about future work. The Pathways 4 Life team can be reached on 01922 721172.

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COUNTY NEWS

Woman in 101 call to report cat

A WOMAN rang police to complain that a cat was meowing outside her front door. Now West Midlands Police has launched a campaign to encourage people to be responsible when they call the force.

On social media they are using the hashtag #ThinkBeforeYouCall to spread the message.

This week the force has shared examples of such calls. And police are reminding members of the public that these increase queuing time for those who have a more serious matter to report.

Firms could save £27m on water

FIGURES released by Utilitywise have revealed that firms in the Midlands could collectively save as much as £27 million on their water bills.

This follows deregulation of the water market in England, giving business owners the chance to renegotiate their existing water contracts or look to a new supplier.

Around 164,000 businesses in the Midlands now have control over who supplies their water, giving the local water market a value of approximately £276m. The water market in England is now valued at £2bn.

Thousands prepare to mark Ramadan

THOUSANDS of Muslims across the region are preparing for the religious festival, Ramadan with a month of prayer and fasting.

This year Ramadan starts on May 27 and will finish on June 24, both Saturdays.Following this, on June 25, Muslims will celebrate Eid al-Fitr which is often known as just Eid.

This celebration, which is to be held on June 25, marks the end of the Ramadan fasting and the start of the next month, Shawwal.

Sex abuse charities get £75,000 boost

A CHARITY that helps victims of sexual exploitation in the Black Country has received a £75,000 cash boost.

Walsall-based Street Teams has been donated the five-figure sum from Lloyds Bank Foundation, one of the country's leading grant makers.

It will help the charity's Transition Project, which helps support young adults at risk of exploitation, grooming and trafficking by providing one-to-one help in a range of practical issues including housing and benefits.

Teddy bear tales

CLENT History Society holds its open meeting on May 25 when Dr Gillian White will be giving a talk on teddy bears, at 8pm in Clent Parish Hall, Church Avenue, Clent.

Dr White has been curator of the Warwickshire Museum and of the National Trust property, Hardwick Hall.

Readers drive home point over crumbling routes



The road surface in Buchanan Avenue, Walsall



A picture showing the problems in Stourbridge



Problems highlighted in Station Road, Wombourne

Worst potholes on our roads revealed



WE knew the state of the roads in the Black Country and Staffordshire was bad – we just didn't realise how bad!

When The Chronicle launched its campaign to highlight the most pothole-ridden roads in our region in order that they should get priority for repairs, we were already aware of a few trouble spots.

But we have been inundated with emails, reports and pictures of some shocking holes endured by drivers on a daily basis.

Based on the number of reports and looking at the pictures readers have sent us, we have compiled a top 10 of what we believe are the worst roads for potholes in our area. The most complaints we received were regarding roads in Staffordshire taking six of the top ten spots.

Hill Top at Hednesford was reported to us by a number of people and pictures showed a succession of potholes all around these busy islands and the roads which approach it. Reader Paul Gill sent us one picture where fresh road markings had been painted over the potholes with a large dip in one line as it sank into a hole.

Reporting

Carlisle Road on the Longford Estate in Cannock, was flagged up by locals and a number of pictures submitted. Resident Sandra McLeod said: "The whole length of the road is riddled with bad potholes."

Five Ways Island in nearby Heath Hayes was flagged up as having 38 separate outstanding complaints about the state of the road surface. There were several complaints about the A449 along its length through Kingswinford. One reader, Jo Well, complained: "There is a strong possibility of an accident on this busy, fast road as drivers swerve to avoid them."

Many readers complained about the state of the A460 from the motorway island for junction 11 of the M6 heading into Cannock. Wombourne was flagged up by a number of readers as having crumbling roads, particularly around Station Road, while Pattingham was also highlighted.

In addition we received shocking pictures of small craters on roads in Stourbridge, Walsall and Wolverhampton. Roads in Great Wyrley and Rugeley also featured regularly.

Did your road make it in our worst potholes list?

The Chronicle's Top 10:

Hill Top, Hednesford – works beginning in August

Carlisle Road, Longford Estate, Cannock – no date set

Five Ways Island, Heath Hayes – works beginning in July

A449 through Kingswinford – 'added to future programme of work'

A460/M6 junction 11 island and surrounding area – repairs now carried out

Station Road and surrounding area, Wombourne – no date set

High Street, Pattingham – no date set

Romsley Road, Stourbridge – 'action as soon as possible'

Buchanan Avenue, Walsall – repaired

Wergs Hall Road, Wolverhampton – no response

The Chronicle has taken the results to the relevant councils and there is good news for local people. A programme of work to resurface the roads and replace damaged kerbstones as part of a £240,000 investment is to take place at Hill Top, with work due to get under way this August. Similarly, significant work is planned for the Five Ways Island with a five-week project due to start in July.

And work has already taken place to repair some of the potholes and damage on the A460/M6 junction 11 island since the Chronicle readers initially flagged up the problems.

Staffordshire's highways chief Mark Deaville said: "We have to prioritise pothole repairs where they pose the biggest risk to members of the public and are currently finalising our programme of re-



Hill Top, Hednesford, riddled with potholes



A copy of the E&S in a Wergs Hall Road pothole



Five Ways island in Heath Hayes, Cannock

pairs for the next 12 months to ensure it delivers the maximum benefits with the budget available."

Alan Lunt, strategic director for place directorate at Dudley Council, said: "We have a robust system in place with inspection teams who identify road defects such as potholes, with the most severe cases highlighted for urgent attention. Clearly, we have to prioritise the most serious problems above others but we are working to deal with as many as we can."

Walsall Council said: "We were aware of the repairs required at Buchanan Avenue and have undertaken pothole repairs with a Velocity Patcher. We can confirm that there is no longer any significant damage outstanding in the area."

Wolverhampton Council has not yet responded.

School's joy over 'good' rating from inspectors

A WALSALL school is celebrating after receiving a 'Good' rating from Ofsted. Grace Academy in Darlaston received the positive rating following the inspection in April, while there has been a large increase in the number of students applying to the academy across all year groups.

Ofsted rated the academy as 'good' in all aspects of school life including leadership and management, quality of teaching and learning, the personal development and behaviour of students, and student outcomes.

Carl Salt, principal of the school, said: "We have set high expectations for staff and students in terms of progress and behaviour, and this has made a real difference to student attainment. We are looking forward to welcoming record numbers of Year 6 students this September."

"We are expecting further progress as students show an increasing desire to learn and develop their skills. English and maths are our strongest subject areas, with maths in particular showing a continuous improvement."

Ofsted highlighted that teachers are using detailed assessments to set work that is accurately based on what students can already do, while consistently promoting literacy and encouraging students to learn to think mathematically and apply their knowledge to practical situations.

In 2016, students matched national progress in both English and Maths GCSE, with over 61 per cent of students achieving A\* to A grades in at least one subject.

Schoolboy forced to floor by youths

A SCHOOLBOY was attacked and forced to the floor by a gang of youths before an off-duty police officer intervened. The incident happened around 4pm last Monday in Station Road, Great Wyrley.

Police community support officer Louise Jones said: "Around 4pm today some youths attempted to attack a schoolboy on his way home on Station Road in Great Wyrley. Some of the youths were known to him."

"They managed to get him to the floor before an off-duty police officer intervened and the lad was brought to the police post in Cheslyn Hay. The lad was not injured."

Anyone who witnessed the incident, or has information on the attack, should call police on 101 quoting incident reference 539 of May 15.

Iconic Goodyear silos finally go

Iconic silos at Wolverhampton's Goodyear site have been taken down as the city's skyline is changed forever. It the last of the Goodyear landmarks to disappear after its famous blue Goodyear chimney was brought down in 2008.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Manor births cap will be reviewed

A CAP on the number of births at Walsall Manor Hospital is to be reviewed amid falling maternity standards. The number of births was limited to 4,200 babies in 2016/17 - from 4,900 - on the back of a damning inspection from the Care Quality Commission.

It subsequently relieved pressure on the maternity department which reflected in a midwife to birth ratio of 1:22 in February - comfortably within the national recommendation of 1:28.

But in March that standard slipped back to 1:28 while only 74 per cent of shifts were 'appropriately staffed' when the requirement is 100 per cent.

The birthing cap is now being reviewed according to a Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust performance report which states: "The trust agreed to cap births during 2016/17 however the current method of birth number management is restricted to bookings for a defined group of GP surgeries only."

"A proposal has been developed to review the ongoing management of this process as the number of births each month is relatively unpredictable and the numbers will fluctuate."

Approach to girls sparks warning

SCHOOLGIRLS have been approached by a suspicious man in Walsall in recent days prompting a police warning about stranger danger.

The male, thought to be between the ages of 20 and 30, was driving a BMW X1 and attempted to engage in conversation with the victims while they were alone.

Pc Jason Allen said: "There have been two incidents of a white male approaching lone schoolgirls. The targets have been senior schoolgirls. If anything is seen please inform the local police on 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk."

Poetry project opening night

A NEW night aiming to bring top-notch performance poetry and spoken word to Walsall kicks off at the Pretty Bricks pub next month.

The event is being held at the pub in John Street on June 4 from 7pm.

'Yes, We Can't' is the latest project from arts collective 'poets, prattlers, and pandemonialists'. Featuring a nationally-recognised headliner each month, with support from a published Midlands poet, and a number of open-mic spots also available.

It is a pay-as-you-feel event and the opening night includes Paul Francis.

Call for relatives

THE Black Country coroner has appealed for help to trace family members of a man found dead at his Wilenhall home.

The body of 74-year-old Robert Williams was discovered at the property in Mill Lane. He died on April 28. Call 0121 569 7200 with details.

Cinema hope for hospital with voting on website

WALSALL Manor Hospital chiefs, are calling on people to vote for children's ward, Ward 21, to receive a state-of-the-art cinema installation, complete with all the latest technology.

The "Cine-makeover" campaign is being hosted by Finite Solutions, a national company specialising in smart home technologies and bespoke home cinema design and installation.

As part of the campaign patients, relatives, hospital staff and members of the public were invited to nominate their local children's hospital or ward to receive a full cinema room installation.

The people of Walsall can now support the Manor by casting their vote at: [www.finitesolutions.co.uk/cine-makeover/](http://www.finitesolutions.co.uk/cine-makeover/). The winning hospital will receive a cinema room worth over £15,000, with a full suite of top-of-the-range equipment including a HD projector and 100" screen, state-of-the-art surround sound, Blu-Ray player and games console, as well as a series of children's movies.

Nominees were asked to submit a short description of what the new facility could be used for first, such as hosting a Disney film marathon, a console gaming tournament or a pyjama party with popcorn etc, along with a supporting image of the proposed room for the installation (if available).

Simon Mathieson, Finite Solutions' Consultancy Director said: "We've been blown away by the fantastic response we've had to the Cine-makeover campaign."

Call for action to tackle gang videos

INTERNET firms need to do more to combat the spread of gang videos, West Midlands police chiefs have said.

Gangs in the region have been posting videos on the likes of YouTube which advocate violence, but despite efforts from the police many of these videos have not been removed, according to West Midlands PCC David Jamieson.

He told a meeting of the Strategic Policing and Crime Board that despite the force's best efforts, videos advocating violence often remain online - and thugs who 'glorify their crimes and torment their victims will not be tolerated'.

Assistant Chief Constable Alex Murray said at the meeting in Birmingham officers have a range of methods to deal with those who engage in social media taunts or post violent videos.

The discussion of the videos followed a question from Walsall businessman Waheed Saleem about how: "Will the Chief Constable set out the how the Force is dealing with use of social media by criminal gangs to glorify their crimes?"

Mr Jamieson said: "Criminals who glorify their crimes and torment their victims will not be tolerated."

Childminder's book for youngsters



Author Loren Haigh, of Walsall

A CHILDMINDER in Walsall is juggling caring for kids with starting a career as a children's author after launching her first book.

Mother-of-two Loren Haigh recently published her first reading and colouring book Amelia the Dreamer.

The book tells the tale of a young girl Amelia who draws her dreams a picture of somewhere she'd like to visit. She ends up in a perfect world and has to work out how to get back to reality. The book - which is available online - is black and white inside so children can choose to colour it in.

It was released on May 8. The 26-year-old, who has two children Olivia, aged six, and Ruby, one, is delighted with how the book turned out.

"I used to write little stories when I was a girl and did loads of them, she said. "One morning I woke up and thought I wanted to start writing again. I followed it through this time and got my first book published."

"I'm really pleased with how it looks and Olivia loves it. I used to write about the typical girl things like princesses when I was younger but this is first book I've written."

"So far I've had very good feedback with it. I'm delighted." The book is available on Amazon and retails at £12.45. Mrs Haigh hopes to hold a book launch in the near future to promote Amelia the Dreamer. She added: "I would now like to hold a book launch which I'm hoping to sort out in July. And I'm in the middle of writing my second book. It will be a sequel to Amelia the Dreamer."

To purchase the book search Amelia the Dreamer on [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk). A kindle edition of the book is available at a reduced price of £3.99.

Man was caught stealing from firm in Ebay sting

A MAN who stole from his employer in an attempt to pay back a £50,000 debt was caught after the business set up a sting operation.

Adrian Hale, aged 46, from Great Charles Street, Walsall, worked as a picker with Brownhills company L&S Engineers, between July and November last year.

During this time, he stole 134 items with a combined market value of £7,834, which he then put on Ebay with his brother Richard Hale and sold through an account named Hale2850, which has since been deleted.

Walsall Magistrates Court heard that Hale, who pleaded guilty to one count of theft by employee, was trying to recoup cash towards debts he had accrued through what he believed to be a 'no win, no fee' court dispute with a previous company he worked for relating to an injury, which left him with 'huge medical and legal bills', to pay. In total, he made £1,500 from the operation before being caught out.

After a stock check was taken, bosses at L&S Engineers looked on Ebay to see if there were any parts similar to what they had lost up for sale, which led them to the account set up by Hale and his brother, who pleaded guilty to handling stolen goods.

They then marked up similar items in their warehouse, waited for them to be listed on Ebay and brought them back. Prosecuting, Mr Tim Talbot-Webb, said: "The defendant admitted straight away to police what he had done. He was caught out via a sting operation in what was not a very sophisticated operation."

Mr Andrew Chowdhury, defending, said: "He feels genuine remorse and embarrassment about what he has done. The fact is he was in a lot of debt, and still is. This has brought a lot of stress on to him and he is in poor health at the moment, having suffered four strokes since he was first arrested."

Chief magistrate Neil Ravenscroft ordered that Hale pay back £3,917 and a victim surcharge of £50, as well as issuing a six week curfew from the hours of 7pm to 7am.

The court heard that Hale's brother Richard, 38, from Bassett Road, Wednesbury, 'didn't know' that the items were stolen and put them up on Ebay to help his brother. He was given a 12 month community order involving 100 hours of unpaid work, as well as being told to pay £3,917, an £85 victim surcharge and £185 court costs.

Walsall woman's plea for jewels



Marilyn Stanton with a Victorian belt, similar to the kind of items she is after

A WALSALL charity worker is appealing for unwanted jewellery to help raise money to help the less fortunate. Marilyn Stanton, 67, from Felsall, has been helping with Oxfam for the last 15 years.

In the last two years she has started selling old jewellery at a monthly collectors fair in Coven to raise extra money for Oxfam. However she is now running out of people's old jewellery to sell and is calling on residents to donate.

She said: "I have been raising money for Oxfam for many years now to help with its work in third world countries."

"I have been helping at the charity for 15 years at its shop in Aldridge and I found we were getting a lot of older costume jewellery coming in. I run a stall at a collectors fair in Coven every month so I decided to take this jewellery along and set up a mini stall next to mine to sell the pieces

on and raise money for Oxfam. To this point I have raised £1,376 in what is probably about two years."

"I just need people to donate their old unwanted jewellery so I can continue raising money for Oxfam. Even if the jewellery is broken just bring it along and I can fix it. I just need more stuff."

Anyone with old jewellery can pop into the Oxfam shop at Anchor Parade in Aldridge and leave unwanted items there.

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# Why is the old £1 coin taking a pounding

DISCOVERED any of the old paper £5 notes in your wallets or purses in the past week or two?

You will no doubt know they are no longer legal tender, and will have to be exchanged at the bank. It will be the same with the old, round £1 coins. While half the country's vending machines and parking meters do not seem to be ready for the new, multi-sided coins, we will still be expected to dispense with the old coins by October.

But why the indecent haste? The new fiver only entered circulation in September, yet in less than eight months it has become currency non-grata. The new pound coin has only been with us a few weeks, yet there seems to be a real hurry to get rid of them.

When the original pound coin was introduced in 1983, the old £1 note continued to be legal tender for another five years, allowing it to gradually be phased out without any inconvenience. I can't see any reason why they can't do the same today.

□□□

THERE are many, many things on which I disagree with Jeremy Corbyn – giving children the vote for a start – but when it comes to hospital parking charges, he is spot on.

Having spent the past six weeks making twice-daily visits to a seriously ill loved, the experience was traumatic enough, without being fleeced over parking.

For most of that time I parked on a housing estate across the road, probably to the chagrin of residents. Well sorry folks, but I always took care to park legally and considerately.

Anyway, had I not done this, it would have cost me £4.60 every time, or £9.20 a day. That's just over £285 a month, the cost of a small mortgage. Or to put it another way, it is more than half the basic state pension.

Who has got that sort of money? Apart from the bigwigs who come up with ideas like this, of course.

□□□

HOW to get people out to vote. Last week a leaflet came through the door for one of the candidates in my constituency, urging us not to worry about national politics, but to judge him on his record locally.

"The vote here will have no impact on the national picture," he says in his leaflet. Which I think roughly translates as "don't worry, the other side are going to win anyway."

Having known the gentleman in question for well over 20 years, I would agree that he is extremely hard-working and committed to his constituents.

But something is very wrong when a politician's election battle-cry is that a vote for him won't make any difference to how the country is run.

## Political ramblings starting to reach a crescendo



Tony Blair in 1997, but how much did his victory have to do with his hunting ban pledge?



Is it a hare, or is it a Leprechaun? Answers on a postcard to....(not really!)



Jeremy Corbyn, denoting his A-level passes, all two of them. Yes, maths not a strong point

# Will May be foxed in her hunt for power?

"THE proverb that money does not buy you happiness is a lie put about by the rich to stop the poor killing them." Sir Michael Caine, as quoted this week by Max Hastings.

THERESA May says she supports fox hunting and would allow a free vote in Parliament on repealing the hunting ban. Big mistake. Hunting is a pastime enjoyed by only a few thousand people yet it offends millions. Successive opinion polls show that a majority of Britons – even in rural areas – are opposed to it. And while it is not something that would swing an election result alone, it is an issue which persuades people who might otherwise not vote to go to the polling station and vote against it.

HUNTING probably played a part in Tony Blair's 1997 landslide victory when Labour's manifesto included a promise to ban it. It certainly affected the Wolverhampton South West result where the lifelong hunter and Tory grandee Nick Budgen lost his seat to the passionately anti-hunt Jenny Jones. It was a surprising result (not least to Jones who resigned after just one term in the Commons). I was there at the count and will never forget the exultation as Labour's majority of 5,118 was announced. I wrote at the time: "As the feely-huggy brigade cheered Jenny Jones, a great roar went up, like a pack baying at the kill. And they reflected on how easily they had flushed out and culled the fox-hunting barrister in Wolverhampton South West. Tallyho." Cold logic tells us that the fate of a small furry predator should not influence great affairs of state. But it does, and by supporting the hunt Theresa May is risking millions of votes.

ISRAEL has released covert footage of a Palestinian hunger striker allegedly eating biscuits and sweets in his cell. I am reminded of a reader some years ago who solemnly informed me

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



that, all other tactics having failed, he was going on hunger strike to pursue a grievance with his local council. Three hours later he rang to say he had called it off. Had he forced the council to back down? "No," he explained. "I was bloody famished."

A FORMER comrade of the hate preacher Anjem Choudary is reported to have returned from Syria to the UK where he is working as a pizza delivery rider. Hell, this is serious. In the great scheme of things, I bet far more lardy-arse Britons are killed every year by take-away pizza than by terrorism. Double-thick, special greasy 12-inch with extra spicy sausage for the infidel at No 33.

WALKING down the lane, I spotted a little chap not more than two feet tall with his arms folded. We studied each other, 100 yards apart. He turned out to be a hare standing on his back legs, and I've never seen any animal looking quite so human. I wonder if that's where leprechaun sightings came from.

THIS is the time of year when male pheasants – sometimes called the poor man's peacock – emerge in the greatest glory. They are as stately as an ibis, as richly hued as a bird of paradise and far better behaved than peacocks. We have one peacock in the garden at Chateau Rhodes who comes to the window with his harem of five hens and taps on the pane to be fed. Every human who sees him is bowled over by his iridescent plumage and dramatic scarlet wattles. The mystery is that his rather drab mates seem

totally unimpressed by his display. His most dazzling courtship display is met by their utter indifference. Some weeks from now the chicks will appear. I often wonder how.

PREACHING the benefits of an inquiring mind, Jeremy Corbyn says: "I don't consider myself the world's greatest intellectual but you learnt from everybody, don't close your mind to the thoughts of others." Pity he didn't follow that mantra in his schooldays. Corbyn was a privileged pupil but despite the benefits of a prep school and grammar school, he achieved only two dismal E-grade passes in his A-levels. Like he says, not the world's greatest intellectual.

AND while we're on it, why this 1950s-style obsession with nationalising the railways and squeezing the banks until the pips squeak? Half the population hardly ever uses a train and how many of us even know a single investment banker, let alone blame him for our ills? If Really Old Labour wants my vote (and such a thing is not impossible), then get a grip on the dodgiest sector of them all. Nationalise the entire insurance industry with its mega-rich bosses, phony competition, utter contempt for loyal customers and endless payouts to 'whiplash victims' who are no such thing. Dozens of firms are selling identical policies with premiums vastly inflated to cover the cost of celebrity advertising and stuffed toys. Sweep it all away, create the British Insurance Authority, eliminate the industrial-scale corruption and give us proper insurance, for the people, by the people. Or is that too radical, Jez?

AS I'm on holiday this week, I'd be grateful if you would hold those emails for a few days. Especially you three-a-day correspondents. You know who you are.

## TALKING POINT



# I'm voting green, in the garden of course

GRIPPED by election fever? Thought not. I haven't been either.

Until, that is, I had 'visitors' the other evening and I suddenly had a rather good idea.

Why don't we, the electorate, offer up our own manifesto in place of all the waffle the political parties are inflicting on us? Let me explain.

There I was, out in the back garden, doing a bit of early evening weeding when . . . Ding-Dong.

Off come the gardening gloves and dusty old boots, and off I go to see who's at the door.

Trouble is, by the time I've traipsed through the house, all I can see is a group of them disappearing round the corner before I can even get to the front door.

They being half a dozen 'political' types who are obviously calling at as many homes as they can, simply to find out who the occupants intend to vote for. And how did I know they were canvassing for votes? Because two, yes two, party leaflets were on the mat in the porch. Such an impersonal calling card, I'm sure you'll agree.

Incidentally, the environmentally friendly types among you will be pleased to hear that the leaflets went straight in the recycling bin, which by coincidence was being emptied the next day.

So what would I have said if I'd got to the door in time?

They'll never know, but for the benefit of the next lot who come a' knocking, here goes.

Firstly, in case they think I need persuading to get out and vote on June 8, I have used every vote I've had since I turned 18, except for a European election when I could not get back from work in time before the polling station closed (yes, we journalists have the hardest job in the world!).

Second, there is one party I have never voted for and hope I never have to.

Next, there is one party I will vote for as a tactical move.

Then there is the 'default' party I have voted for when I cannot make my mind up about, or have been unimpressed by, any of the others.

Added to all this, there have been times when my choice has been based on, basically, me being vindictive against certain other candidates on the ballot paper.

Finally, there is a party whose principles I endorse but for a million and one reasons can't always find it in me to support.

So, what does my personal manifesto look like? Just one paragraph really.

The party which promises to outlaw cold calling by any political candidates or their representatives, thus leaving me in peace to get on with some gardening, gets my vote.

Now, if that's not a vote winner, I don't know what is.

STEVE PARLETT

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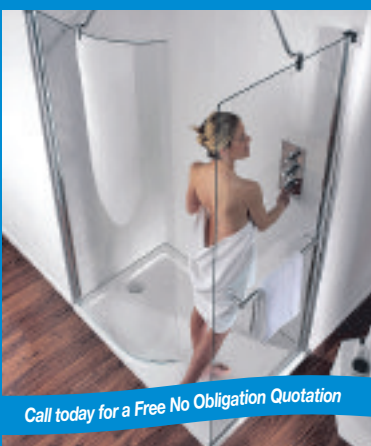
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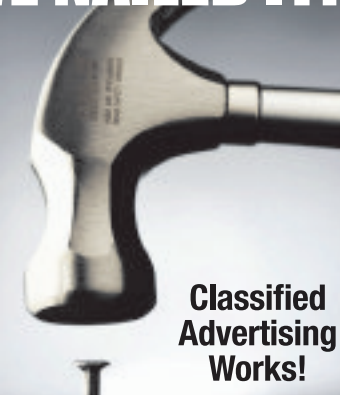
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# Popular destination on the buses

I DON'T think Walsall has ever had a through-bus service to Tamworth before, but I have recently unearthed one of Arriva's best-kept secrets. Its hourly Monday to Saturday Walsall to Lichfield 35 service, recently taken over by Arriva's Tamworth Garage following closure of their Wednesfield Depot, actually runs through to Tamworth.

What happens is that the 35 on arrival at Stand 5 at Lichfield Bus Station becomes the 765 to Tamworth, different service numbers but effectively one through-service.

Buses leave Walsall at 35 minutes past each hour till early evening, and travel via Rushall, Aldridge and Walsall Wood to Lichfield, thence via Whit-tington and Hopwas to Tamworth, an end-to-end journey which takes 1h 25m. Return buses from Tamworth leave at five minutes past each hour.

I'm delighted because this gives Walsall people a direct link to Tamworth which, like Lichfield, is a popular and attractive destination and of course for Tamworth people Walsall would be ideal as a new destination for a shop-

ping outing, or for visits to the New Art Gallery and the Arboretum.

Fare paying passengers' best deal would be an Arriva day ticket (much cheaper than single tickets to Lichfield and then Tamworth, and then return), while those with older or blind and disabled people's passes (the 'free bus pass') travel free. All they would do is present their pass twice, once on joining, and the second time at Lichfield when the service number changes.

**CLLR RICHARD WORRALL**  
Rushall-Sheffield Ward

## Praise for the Brum bomb crews

BOOM! A controlled explosion triggered by experts has disposed of the 500lb World War 2 bomb which had cleared Aston of both motorists and local residents to sensible safety limits for a day, prior to its timely ignition.

Discovering a huge unexploded bomb must have been a nerve jangling experience for those involved!

The well trained bomb crews that finally made the bomb safe have bravely carried out a dangerous and demanding job. No-one would like to contemplate the damage the bomb may have inflicted if it had not been discovered before exploding by accident or just the ageing process. The staff of the bomb disposal team should receive official recognition for their professional skills. I suggest a civic reception in Birmingham as a celebration of our 'all clear' and in respect of Birmingham's history during the war.

**CLLR DOUG JAMES**  
Walsall

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**POST**  
Walsall Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES  
Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

**EMAIL**  
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**Code of Practice:** Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at [www.ipso.co.uk](http://www.ipso.co.uk). If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

## Ditch the plastic to focus on wildlife

I HAVE heard that TV presenter Simon Reeve has taken a 'no single-use plastic' pledge for June.

Reading about this has made me realise just how much plastic has taken over our lives and how often I buy a plastic bottle, drink the contents and discard it.

True, I am not a litter bug and will always throw the plastic item in a bin, ideally, in a specific recycling bin. But what if there was less plastic in the first place? Simon is taking up the pledge for a good reason - he's backing the Marine Conservation Society (MCS), which is asking people to give up single-use plastics for up to a month.

According to the conservation society, the amount of plastic litter on our streets, parks, canals, rivers and beaches has risen by 180 per cent in 20 years. Plastic is often found in the stomachs of wildlife which lives in the seas, and can even kill them. Turtles are one example.

**ALAN DAVIS**  
Walsall

## No solid reason for leaving, after criticism of Blair

JACKIE Lewis says Tony Blair has a cheek. Yes Jackie but it is a more experienced cheek than yours. He made a mistake in Iraq; he wanted to show a despot that he was as ruthless as him and he wanted to please the US.

Maybe in the long run it will turn

out to be the right strategy, make despots think twice. My real argument with Jackie Lewis is that like all Brexiters she fails to come up with one solid reason for leaving, she fails to come up with one solid financial benefit of leaving.

The only supporting possibilities I have seen so far is that Canada did a good deal (seven years in the making), and Norway are doing well outside of the EU (they only have 5 million mouths to feed we have 60m).

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7 The Chronicle Thursday, May 25, 2017



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# Tackling fat with men's footballing league start

FOOTBALL is being used as a means of losing weight for men in Walsall with a 14-week league that has been backed by the Football Association itself.

The Man v Fat Football scheme is for the very first time available in Walsall, with overweight men having the chance to join up for a scheme with a 95 per cent success rate.

By David Banner

Some players have lost up to 70lbs as a result. Thanks to support from Walsall Public Health and leading Midlands landlord who this league will be entirely free for players!

Set up by Andrew Shanahan who himself lost five stone and was fed-up with weight loss classes just for women, Man v Fat combines football with easy to follow diet and lifestyle advice as well as 24/7 online and off-line support.

There's the traditional weigh-ins before each game, but this is then followed-up by a 30 minute game of six-a-side football.

Mr Shanahan, managing director of [www.manvfat.com](http://www.manvfat.com), said: "We're thrilled that 95 per cent of players lose weight and 93 per cent report health improve-

ments, from curing sleep apnoea to huge improvements in blood pressure and joint pain.

"Across 2016 our players lost more than seven tons in weight and we know that we're going to smash that in 2017 with leagues like the one in Walsall."

Man v Fat Football launches at The University of Wolverhampton, Walsall Campus from June 6 2017 and runs every Tuesday from 8-10pm for the next 14 weeks. As the league is entirely free it means the only thing you have to lose by joining is weight...

Players can join up at [www.manvfatfootball.com/](http://www.manvfatfootball.com/) walsall and they can get more information by calling 0845 163 0042 or emailing [football@manvfat.com](mailto:football@manvfat.com)

## Canal festival plans sunk as time runs out



The scene from last year's Brownhills Canal Festival BROWNHILLS'S annual canal festival has been plunged into doubt after organisers failed to sort anything in time.

Brian Stringer and the rest of the Brownhills Local Committee normally organise the event each year, but because of age the committee had left the responsibility to the local area partnership. However after Diane Mansell, the head of the Brownhills partnership, moved on from her role nothing has been organised in time.

Mr Stringer said the council might still organise something for the town centre but that, for this year at least, the committee was not involved.

He said: "The local committee was getting a bit old and long in the tooth to do it ourselves so we thought the organisation would be taken over by the area partnership. However the lady who run it has left and it has not been possible to organise anything in time. We tried to do something but it was just not possible. We might bring it back next year if we get the support we need."

"All the committee is getting near our 80s now and unfortunately the festival is just a lot of work. The council did say they may still put something on but it will not be anything to do with the committee."

The festival is normally held around the end of June.



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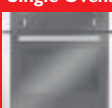
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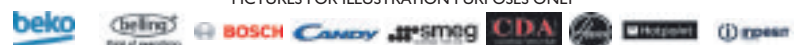
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# Dole claimants for town drop, bucking UK trend

## 'Royals' chosen for big day



Carnival King Joseph Hill



Carnival Queen, Kayleigh Patrick



Carnival Prince Tyler Griffiths



Carnival Princess, Poppy Wootton

ORGANISERS of Great Wyrley Carnival have chosen the youngsters who will have pride of place in the procession next month.

The Carnival Queen is Kayleigh Patrick, aged 10, while the Carnival King is Joseph Hill, 11.

They will be accompanied by five-year-old Poppy Wootton, who was selected to be Carnival Princess, and Tyler Griffiths, aged six, who is

Carnival Prince. All four will be on a float as it makes its way through Great Wyrley.

The carnival will be held on the Star Land, with the parade leaving at midday. It will be followed by numerous attractions in the main arena.

To book a stall, contact Pauline Kelsey on 01922 414647. Admission to the carnival is free.

THE number of people claiming unemployment benefits in Walsall fell last month, bucking a trend of a rise across the West Midlands.

It came after the unemployment total in the region fell by 5,000 to 161,000 in the three months to March. Nationally the unemployment rate fell to a 42-year low with a record number of people in work, Office for National Statistics figures show.

Those claiming in Walsall, including Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit, were down 10 on March to 5,095 - three per cent of the working population.

Walsall Council leader Sean Coughlan said: "As the leader of the council I'm really pleased more people are in work, but there are still concerns about the type of work and the level of pay people are getting."

"But this is good news and backs up what we've been saying that we will support the economy as an administration and attract new businesses to Walsall."

### Position

"One of the things myself and other leaders across the Black Country have been working on for a number of years is upskilling our residents."

"That ensures they're in a position to get the jobs that are on offer, but is still a real issue."

Wolverhampton saw a rise of 145 to 7,100 and its rate of 4.4 per cent is the second highest in the West Midlands behind Birmingham, where 32,570 are claiming, at 4.6 per cent. Sandwell rose 50 to 7,335 (3.7 per cent) and Dudley by 45 to 5,925 (3.1 per cent).

South Staffordshire had a rise of 20 to 790 (1.2 per cent).

The UK jobless total fell by 53,000 to 1.54 million in the quarter, a rate of 4.6 per cent, the lowest since summer 1975. The West Midlands rate is 5.7 per cent. The number claiming unemployment benefits was up in the region last month by 1,035 to 89,060 - 2.5 per cent of the working population.

The national employment figure increased by 122,000 to almost 32 million, the highest since records began in 1971.

Average earnings increased by 2.4 per cent in the year to March, just 0.1 per cent up on the previous month and below the latest CPI inflation rate of 2.7 per cent.

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# Heart attack victim's wife in fundraise call



Fundraiser Carol Watts, centre, in the red dress, with members of her family during the Miss Charity Heart pageant

**A WALSALL mum is calling on her local community to rally together and fundraise for the British Heart Foundation's (BHF) 'Wear it. Beat it.' day next month, to help beat heart disease for good.**

Carol Watts, aged 56, is calling on everyone in the West Midlands to wear red on Friday June 9, and hold a fundraising event to help the charity raise £1million for life saving research after her husband Keith suffered two heart attacks in 2012.

Keith suffered his first heart attack while playing golf in the July. Since that fateful day, the Watts

family are now closer than ever and value quality time together more than ever before. They have also founded the Miss Charity Heart beauty pageant, which takes place in February each year and has raised in excess of £15,000 for the BHF's pioneering research.

Now Carol is calling on everyone to follow in their footsteps. Last year more than 15,000 people took part in Wear it. Beat it., raising over £750,000.

Speaking of her involvement, Carol said: "If it wasn't for the charity's vital research, my husband may not be here today. It was a complete shock when I was told that my husband was in hospital after a heart attack on the golf course. Thankfully, he recovered and a few weeks later, we loaded the

car with ball-gowns and make-up and made our way to Blackpool where my daughter and step-daughter were competing in a beauty pageant.

"But as we were having breakfast at the hotel, he looked up at me and told me to call an ambulance. He knew what was happening. He told the girls to do their best as he wanted them to carry on as he got rushed off to hospital in the back of an ambulance. Reluctantly, the girls put on their dresses and got on stage. In a twist of fate, Jessica went on to win and Hannah came third, but we didn't have time to celebrate. Without even getting changed, we rushed straight to the hospital."

Sign up by visiting wearitbeatit.bhf.org.uk or call 0300 330 0645 and get your free fundraising pack.

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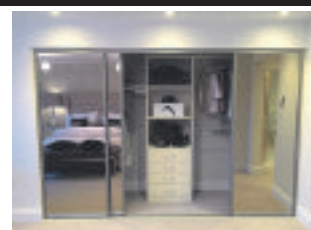
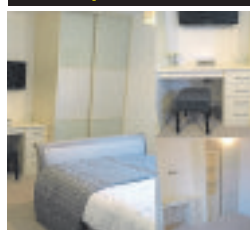


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# Workers finally clear up town rubbish mountain

A MOUNTAIN of rubbish branded fit for a 'firestarter's party' has finally been cleared.

The rubbish at Kendricks Road in Darlaston featured mattresses, bath rubs, sinks, furniture and fridges and had been building for more than three months.

Walsall Council has now finally cleared the site after pledging to do so 'as soon as possible' back in April.

A jubilant councillor Doug James, who represents Darlaston, said: "We can't let the yobs win. Darlaston people have pride in their communities. A huge thank you to the local workers and local people who raised this issue with me, they are all stars. Local workers do not want to see their town being messed up."

Councillor James previously raised concerns the 'eyesore' site would put off prospective investment, hamper any chances of opening a railway station on the site as well as attract arsonists. At the time, he said: "Potentially this may be a site for the future Darlaston Railway Station if the surveyors ever find it again under the garbage. What business will Walsall Council attract to the Darlaston Enterprise Zone with this eyesore for all to see? I expect to hear of a huge fire in Kendrick Road very soon, sadly, placing fire service staff at risk."

Earlier this year the Express & Star revealed the scale of fly-tipping in the area with more than 30,000 incidents reported to councils in the Black Country, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Birmingham last year, a 16 per cent rise on 2012/13 figures.

Walsall was exposed as one of the worst-hit areas with 4,599 incidents costing the council more than £350,000 to clear-up - more than anywhere else in Staffordshire and the Black Country.



The now cleared site at Kendricks Road



The mountain of rubbish at Kendricks Road which has now been cleared

# Smoking out soccer fans

NINE people have been arrested at football league games in the West Midlands over smoke bombs this season.

West Midlands Police reported bombs were let off at 16 league games over the 2016/17 season.

They include two smoke bombs in the game between Walsall and Charlton in August last year. No-one was arrested.

Smoke bombs were let off at Walsall games against Sheffield United and

Swindon. No smoke bombs were reported let off at the Molineux, but one went off at Aston Villa's Villa Park for the home games against Wolves.

One person was arrested in connection to the Villa Park flare.

At West Bromwich Albion's The Hawthorns, one person was arrested in connection with a smoke bomb against Derby County, and another against Everton. Those caught face up to three months' in prison if convicted.

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## Plaque tribute for skater Curry

ONE man's determination to revive the reputation of a Birmingham sporting icon has paid off after the forgotten hero was honoured with a blue plaque.

In 1976, John Curry made figure skating history at the Winter Olympics taking home two gold medals for team GB, winning BBC Sports Personality of the Year. But in the years that followed, he slowly slipped out of the public consciousness, and his untimely death in 1994 left a generation unaware of his achievements.

Actor and writer Tony Timberlake embarked on personal journey to change this – first through his one-man show, Looking For John, which premiered at Birmingham Rep last November and secondly by nominating John, to be honoured with a blue plaque at the house where he was born in Warwick Road, Acocks Green.

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Carl Rice and John's brother, Andrew, unveiled the plaque, on May 15.

# How was school left to get into this state? Boss hits out at E-ACT

**'THEY should be sorry for what they have done to so many children's education and for the stress and distress caused to so many dedicated staff.'**

A teaching union boss has hit out at the academy trust which runs an inadequate school in Willenhall. Russ Bragger, general secretary of Walsall's National Union of Teachers has blasted the E-ACT Academy Trust, which runs Willenhall E-ACT Academy.

The school received a damning Ofsted report last week which lambasted teachers, governors and students alike. It was ranked inadequate in all areas by the schools watchdog.

Mr Bragger laid the blame for the appalling

Report by David Cosgrove

Ofsted result squarely at the feet of the Academy Trust – and said he has been raising concerns with its leaders and directors for over a year. He said: "How was the school allowed to get into the state that the Ofsted inspectors found? E-ACT have been in control of this school for many years. In recent years they have appointed and then got rid of various leaders (headteachers and principals) who brought in hurried and ill thought-out changes which were then changed by the next leader."

"This led to pupils and staff not fully understanding what they were expected to do. E-ACT

have created the present situation. They have known what is happening throughout. For over a year I have been representing concerns of the teachers who are NUT members.

"The teachers have consistently expressed their concern for the safety of pupils and staff and demanded more support and capacity in the behaviour and pastoral systems to allow them to do their job of teaching children. It is the lack of this support that has led to the very high staff turnover.

"E-ACT should not be 'disappointed' at Ofsted's decision, they should be sorry for what they have done to so many children's education and for the stress and distress caused to so many dedicated staff." He said the NUT

would work with the new head to improve the school. The NUT hopes to work with the new headteacher, Kirsty Jones, to get the support and stability from E-ACT that the staff need to improve the school."

An E-ACT spokesman said: "We fully recognise that there have been challenges at E-ACT, but we are confident that Willenhall Academy will continue to make rapid progress. The Ofsted report itself recognises that E-ACT has already begun to address the aspects of greatest concern. The trust will continue to strengthen leadership, and ensure that senior staff have greater visible presence around the academy so that students are absolutely clear on expectations."

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# Triage team saves West Midlands Police £1.8m

A SPECIALIST squad has saved West Midlands Police an estimated £1.8 million in wasted time since its launch around two and half years ago, it was disclosed today.

Mental health issues account for around 20 per cent of the daily demand on police officers but are now handled in the Black Country by the Triage team.

It is headed by a police sergeant and has six constables, three paramedics and four community psychiatric nurses and offers a near round-the-clock service. They travel together and the mix of skills means the unit has the experience to deal with matters at the scene rather than leaving police or ambulance crews trying to cope alone as the first point of call.

Hundreds of people have been spared unnecessary spells in cells while expert mental health advice is sought and many more have avoided being needlessly taken to accident and emergency departments.

Since its launch in November 2014 the team has had over 7,500 cases passed to them by either the police or ambulance service. They were able to give expert on-the-spot assessments of 3,000 people suffering from mental health issues, ensuring that three quarters of these could be properly treated while remaining at home.

As a result 689 people avoided being unnecessarily detained under the Mental Health Act by police fearful that they might be in need of care and control. This save the West Midlands force approximately £1,825,000.

Sgt Lloyd Fox, supervisor said: "This is an excellent example of partnership work, police and ambulance respond daily to patients suffering mental ill health and as a service we do not always do or know the best



Front, from left, Sgt Lloyd Fox from Wolverhampton (21 years service), Julia Less, Wolverhampton (paramedic, eight years), Bernice Hancox, Malvern (paramedic 12 years), Pc Anna Wood, Dudley (nine years). Back, from left Tess Moroney-Thornorton, Wolverhampton (17 years), Cathy Mander, Lichfield (Community Psychiatric Nurse, nine years), Pc Glenn Flavell, Dudley (13 years), Jason Blackwood from Birmingham (CPN, 16 years), Harriet Lawrence, Dudley (CPN, 10 years)

thing to do for the patient. Now with Triage they receive more appropriate help and support, remaining at home and release emergency services to deal with other incidents.

Richard Bloore, a paramedic on the team, added: "The Triage car is an invaluable resource for frontline crews. It is able to provide specialist advice and on scene assessments to patients. This ensures that patients are signposted to the most appropriate care

pathway for their presentation and reduces the need to convey patients to A&E." Clinical Commissioning Groups from Walsall, Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell have just agreed to fund the team for another 12 months.

It operates in a marked West Midlands Ambulance Service responder vehicle, which is also equipped for emergencies and from 10am to 2am, Sunday to Thursday and 10am to 3am, Friday and Saturdays.

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# New police chief arrives with worldwide experience



ACC Boycott

WEST Midlands Police's new Assistant Chief Constable Sarah Boycott has arrived from Cheshire – via New York and Darfur.

ACC Boycott has spent her 24-year career with Cheshire Police where she graduated from beat officer to become one of the most senior women in UK policing. She worked on two notable secondments during her time with the north-west force – one at Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, driving up standards in UK policing, and the other overseeing a UN police project in war-torn Africa.

ACC Boycott – a keen distance runner who has taken on

marathons in The Potteries and Glasgow – was part of a HMIC inspection team that visited WMP headquarters in 2015 to assess if the force was offering the public good value for money and effective leadership.

The following year, West Midlands Police was named as one of only two UK forces rated 'outstanding' – and it was during the inspection ACC Boycott got a feel for the force. She said: "I'm hugely passionate about local policing... that's the bedrock of policing. It's my remit here in the West Midlands – it's an exciting opportunity and I'm looking forward to making a difference to local communities."

# A real Buz for Black Country history on tour

A COURT case in Halesowen, the coalfields of Wednesbury and Walsall and the Goth family from Wolverhampton all feature in a history tour... of Birmingham.

A sight-seeing bus, which takes passengers on an historical journey around the Second City, highlights several important and little-known links with the Black Country. Ian Jelf, a guide on the Big Brum Open-Top Buz, which has just launched for the 2017 season, reveals that Halesowen played a part in the discovery that Birmingham had a 'great fire' long before the Great Fire of London.

The evidence was unearthed about 20 years ago as the latest reincarnation of the Bullring was being built, when archaeologists found remnants of charred wood from medieval timber-framed houses.

But it was a chance rummage through archives, which yielded papers on a Halesowen court case from 1313, that revealed how large the blaze had been.

In the dock was Thomas de Turkebi who claimed that all his documents had been burned 'ad magnam combustionem ville de Birmingham', which translates as 'in the great fire of the town of Birmingham'.

Ian says: "The fact that this was accepted without question some 10 or so years after the fire, and that it was referred to as 'the great fire', shows it was a significant event that was well known locally.

## Landowners

"But it wasn't until 20 years ago that anyone was aware of the Great Fire of Birmingham, with these two sources of evidence emerging coincidentally at around the same time.

The bus tour visits Edgbaston where the Goth family, originally from Wolverhampton, were big landowners after making their fortunes in London and becoming, says Ian, the nouveau riche of the 17th century.

The Goths, who married into other wealthy families, now live in Hampshire but the Anstruther-Goth-Calthorpe family still owns the freehold of large pockets of Edgbaston. Birmingham's famous network of canals features strongly in the tour and were a major link with the Black Country, says Ian.

"It was a very symbiotic relationship, with all the raw materials in the Black Country and the entrepreneurs in Birmingham. They were economically dependent on each other.

"When they were digging up the Bull Ring recently, they also found iron ore that would have been smelted in Wednesbury and Dudley 700-800 years ago.



The Floozie in the Jacuzzi in Victoria Square



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"The very first canal was between Birmingham and Wednesbury which would have given access to the coalfields of the Black Country. In 1769 when the canal opened, the price of coal dropped by a half because it was suddenly so much quicker and easier to transport it in bulk.

"Wednesbury had one of oldest coalfields in Europe. Black Country coal was very close to the surface. The Delves in Walsall was so named because it was so easy to dig around there."

The bus tour kicks off outside Victoria Square dominated by Birmingham's

splendid 19th century Council House and the River Goddess sculpture, dubbed the Floozy in the Jacuzzi, by locals.

Surprisingly the bus is not operated by Birmingham City Council or its tourist office. Proud Brummie Sue Behan bought the double-decker for £9,000 nine years ago because she thought visitors should have the opportunity to know about Brum's history.

She said: "The ever-changing road system doesn't always make it easy but the city is evolving all the time which is what makes it so interesting."

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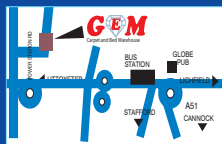
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mountains and foothills of Snowdonia, and the dunes and sea of Llyn Peninsula, Harlech is most famous for its medieval fortress, Harlech Castle, built by the English King Edward I in the 13th Century in his attempt to subdue the Welsh and is now a World Heritage Site.

### Favourite

The holiday home pitches either look towards the imposing Harlech Castle, or out across the countryside towards the sea, which is only a 10-minute level walk away from the park.

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# I quick-stepped to Dirty Dancing role

It didn't take Carlie Milner long to agree to star in Dirty Dancing. The all-singing, all-dancing performer was delighted to play Penny Johnson.

And who can blame her. Dirty Dancing, which runs at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to June 3, remains one of the nation's favourites.

Exploding with heart-pounding music, breathtaking emotion and sensationally sexy dancing, the film version has been seen by millions across the globe.

The worldwide smash hit tells the classic story of Baby and Johnny, two fiercely independent young spirits from different worlds, who come together in what will be the most challenging and triumphant summer of their lives. Featuring 35 hit songs, including Hungry Eyes, Hey Baby, Do You Love Me? and the heart stopping (I've Had) The Time Of My Life, it remains a true classic.

Carlie says: "It was one very quick chat with agent and we agreed that we'd do it. That was it."

She was formerly with Birmingham Royal Ballet, where she starred in Sleeping Beauty, and she also played in English National Ballet's Swan Lake, at the Royal Albert Hall. Stepping up as Penny Johnson has been a blessing and she's been on the road with it, off and on, since 2014.

"Yes, I started with it a few years ago. I was doing the old production and now we're back with a brand new interpretation of the show. I did the show for a year and a half and then I joined this production and we started rehearsals in June last year.

"Despite doing the show before, it's like doing a whole new show. I've really worked on the part and made it my own. It was a no brainer really."

The response from audiences has been ecstatic and Carlie thinks the musical has the perfect blend of comedy, drama and music to keep people entertained.

"It's a cult classic, it's got a huge following, as does the film, and that lends flavour to the theatre version. It appeals to more than just a theatre goer. You get people of all different ages going. It's lovely and there's the double nostalgia, with the show being set in the 60s but having lots of 80s music. It appeals to a wide audience and I think it will always be that way.

"The thing about Dirty Dancing is that it remains so current. I had the TV on last night and there was an advert and the first thing was the Dirty Dancing steps. It's always on TV. Every couple of months, you'll switch on and it's there. This production is a similar thing. I don't think it will go away. I know every show has to have a rest but then it comes back stronger.

"We had a new choreographer and a new director, new steps and I guess I had a break of six to eight months between shows. It's kind of nice coming back and seeing what else I can bring to it."

Carlie copes well with being away from home and describes herself as a good tourer. She's used to the routine of packing her suitcase each Sunday and hitting the road.

"It's a tough schedule but it's great. You just have to get on with it. You kind of accept that part of it. I'm on the move for a year and get home when I can.

"I like to think I'm pretty disciplined. Not to blow smoke up my own backside but you have to look after yourself and put work before play, if you're feeling tired. The more discipline you have the better. It's such a physical show and is so demanding."

She's looking forward to returning to Birmingham, where she was a student at the BRB. She learned a huge amount from the internationally-renowned troupe.

"BRB is a different world compared to musical theatre, certainly in terms of dance. You learn nothing but professionalism. I really value my time working with those companies at such a young age. It was great. It was invaluable. I feel like I've taken that into the other jobs and it was incredible to be in that.

"And to be in Swan Lake at the Albert Hall, a phenomenal theatre, surrounded by 40 other swans

was insane. I'll never forget it. It was absolutely wonderful.

"I started off in ballet school and I wanted to do classical and that's what I did for the first few years. Like a lot of people who go through this, your options change through the years. Four years ago I decided to get involved in musical theatre. It was quite challenging after coming from a classical background.

Carlie fell into the role of Penny with ease, after understudying her character for a year-and-a-half. "It's something that I've always wanted to do, so to be able to call that role my own was great because I had really enjoyed it previously. In the old show

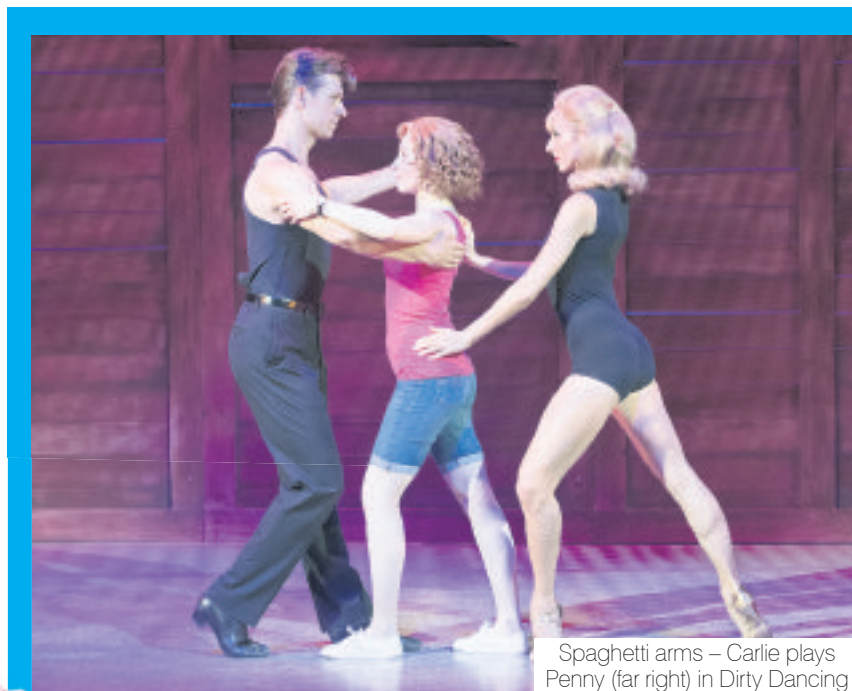
I played Penny quite a lot as an understudy because unfortunately the main cast member suffered an injury.

"I'm quite lucky with the fact that Dirty Dancing is heavily dance based but I do really love all the acting as well. If I told myself four years ago that I would be playing Penny on a national tour I wouldn't have believed myself. This is the highlight of my career.

"It really is the film on stage. We throw a little bit extra in there and you have live singing and group singing parts which don't really feature in the film. It's a theatrical twist on the original."

Dirty Dancing – The Classic Story On Stage originally opened at London's Aldwych Theatre in 2006 with a record-breaking advance of £15 million, making it the fastest-ever selling show in West End theatre history. The production became the longest running show in the history of the Aldwych Theatre and played to over two million people during its triumphant five-year run.

It has become a worldwide phenomenon, with productions staged in the USA, Canada, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden, South Africa, Hong Kong, Singapore and throughout Europe, consistently breaking box office records.



Spaghetti arms – Carlie plays Penny (far right) in Dirty Dancing

*It's a tough schedule but it's great. You just have to get on with it*

Recent sell out tours include France, Germany and Australia.

The first ever UK tour of Dirty Dancing – The Classic Story On Stage, launched in 2011 and then returned to the West End in 2013 playing at the Piccadilly Theatre in London, prior to launching a second UK and Ireland tour.

The new production also features Lewis Griffiths, as Johnny Castle. Lewis has had a prolific career in musical theatre, most recently starring as Nick Massi on the UK tour of Jersey Boys. Other roles in UK tours include Ghost and Legally Blonde, and West End credits include Priscilla Queen of the Desert, Rent and Whistle Down the Wind.

It also features Katie Hartland, as Baby Houseman. Katie made her professional musical theatre debut carrying the watermelons as Baby Houseman, having graduated from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 2015.

The show is set in the summer of 1963, and 17 year-old Frances 'Baby' Houseman is about to learn some major lessons in life as well as a thing or two about dancing. On holiday in New York's Catskill Mountains with her older sister and parents, she shows little interest in the resort activities, and instead discovers her own entertainment when she stumbles across an all-night dance party at the staff quarters.

Mesmerised by the raunchy dance moves and the pounding rhythms, Baby can't wait to be part of the scene, especially when she catches sight of Johnny Castle the resort dance instructor.

A show not to be missed.

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.



Rock 'n' roll musical Grease



# Grease – the one that you want back on stage

Grease is the word at Birmingham Hippodrome where the latest tour of the much-loved rock 'n' roll musical arrives on Monday.

The show, which runs until June 3, is bringing a special guest for the cameo role of Teen Angel – Jimmy Osmond – who played that part in the West End production.

Tom Parker, formerly of boy band The Wanted, will make his musical theatre debut as Danny Zuko, the role made famous in the movie by the young John Travolta. Danielle Hope, who was Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz at the London Palladium after winning TV's Over The Rainbow, will step into Olivia Newton-John's high heel shoes as Sandy. Danielle was also recently seen in Hippodrome panto Dick Whittington.

The role of wisecracking Rizzo will be played by EastEnders and The Bill star Louisa Lytton, one of the youngest Strictly Come Dancing competitors in 2006. Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey's musical, featuring such songs as You're The One That I Want, Summer Nights, Greased Lightnin' and Hopelessly Devoted To You, has been choreographed by Arlene Phillips and directed by David Gilmore, who was also at the helm for stage versions of Happy Days and Footloose.

A saucy feel-good romantic musical set in an American high school during the rock 'n' roll era, Grease is one of the most popular shows. This award-winning production opened in the West End in 1993, where it had a six year run, and has toured ever since. Visit [birminghamhippodrome.com](http://birminghamhippodrome.com) or call 0844 338 5000. Grease will also visit Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from November 27 to December 2.

# Dance delight from breaks to ballet



Hot on the heels of last weekend's B-Side Hip-Hop Festival in and around Birmingham Hippodrome, the UK's biggest festival of Hip Hop Dance, Breakin' Convention, comes to Birmingham bringing jaw-dropping performances from around the world and around the corner.

On Friday and Saturday, June 2 and 3, at Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Breakin' Convention includes performances from international hip hop dance crews including Soweto Skeleton Movers (from South Africa), Just Dance (South Korea) and all-female crew Tentacle Tribe (Canada).

In addition to the headline international acts, local crews, DJs, graffiti art and freestyle jams will

transform The Rep's foyer making Breakin' Convention an experience rather than just a show.

Now in its 14th year, Breakin' Convention has firmly established itself as one of the major highlights on the British dance calendar. It is hosted and curated by UK hip hop pioneer Jonzi D, pictured, who said: "The Birmingham hip hop scene is one of the best in the UK, it's always been hype!"

The festival includes the best from the West Midlands including Rhythm Junkiez Dance Company from Sutton Coldfield and Birmingham companies Jigsaw Collective, Broken Silence, Marshon Cadets, plus 2014 UDO world street dance champions Street Dance Academy.

The two-day festival is suitable for all ages and includes B-Totz for under 10. For full details see [breakinconvention.com](http://breakinconvention.com), tickets start from £10, call 0121 236 4455.

Tonight (Friday) and tomorrow the seductive world of Argentine tango is explored in Milonga at Birmingham Hippodrome, in which Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui brings his unique vision to tango with a cast of 17 performers.

Meanwhile, Northern Ballet bring their new production by Daniel de Andrade, based on the heartbreaking story of The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Tuesday and Wednesday plus, for younger audiences, Goldilocks on Wednesday afternoon.

## Home inspiration for Saint Etienne

Saint Etienne emerged in 1990 with a gentle danceloor-orientated sound as Britpop exploded all around them. Charting with Join Our Club and You're in a Bad Way, the trio of singer Sarah Cracknell (pictured) with Bob Stanley and Pete Wiggs won fans with the albums Foxbase Alpha, So Tough and Tiger Bay. Five years on from their last album, they return with 16 new songs on Home Counties, released on June 2. They have a gig at Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday, June 4.



## Punk and metal rule at Slam Dunk

It's Slam Dunk Saturday this weekend with the rock festival's line-up at Birmingham NEC now in excess of 60 bands.

The Slam Dunk Festival, which is also held at Leeds and Hatfield over the weekend, used to be held at Wolverhampton Civic Halls. It's an annual celebration of punk, ska, emo and metal music. Bands will be performing on eight stages. Headliners include Enter Shikari – marking ten years since debut album Take To The Skies – plus Bowling for Soup, Neckdeep, Tonight Alive, Against Me!, Memphis May Fire and Nottingham's Area 11. They will be performing alongside such favourites as Don Broco, Deaf Havana, Beartooth, Japan's Crossfaith, Reel Big Fish, We The Kings and Less Than Jake. See [slamdunkmusic.com](http://slamdunkmusic.com) for the latest.

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3/7	5	Scarborough
9/7	6	Durham and Northumbria
14/7	5	Falmouth
15/7	5	Eastbourne (more dates)
16/7	5	Isle of Wight (more dates)
19/7	5	Llandudno (more dates)
23/7	7	Scotland Fort William
30/7	5	Bournemouth (more dates)
31/7	5	North Devon Bideford
31/7	5	Isle of Scilly

#### DATE DAYS

4/8	4	Looe
7/8	5	Ilfracombe
11/8	3	Liverpool and Merseyside
22/8	4	Sidmouth (more dates)
26/8	6	Ireland The Giants Causeway
1/9	5	English Lakes
3/9	5	Suffolk Village
15/9	3	Harrogate Flower Show
29/9	5	Isle of Man
10/10	8	Channel Islands
21/10	3	Blackpool
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**CHOICE**



Gwendolen Chatfield

**Jane Austen: Behind Closed Doors (BBC2, 9pm)**  
Historian Lucy Worsley embarks on a road-trip across England to take in some of the places Jane Austen lived in and visited during her lifetime. She aims to demonstrate how Jane's personal experiences influenced the central themes of home and property in her novels, and makes use of detective-work to recreate some of the most important locations that no longer stand. She begins in Stoneleigh Abbey, Warwickshire, retracing a journey that marked one of the many times the Austens veered wildly between wealth and genteel poverty – mirroring the Dashwoods of Sense and Sensibility. Lucy also travels from Jane's birthplace in Steventon, Hampshire, to her brother's grand estate.

**BBC1**

**6.00 Breakfast.** **10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live.** **11.30 Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well.** **(R) 12.00 Football Focus.** **1.00 BBC News: Weather.** **1.15 Pointless Celebrities.** **(R) 2.00 The FA Cup Show.** **4.00 BBC News.** **4.10 Regional Programme.** **4.15 MOTD Live: FA Cup Final Build-Up.** **5.15 MOTD Live: FA Cup Final.** Arsenal v Chelsea (Kick-off 5.30pm). **7.45 Doctor Who.** The Doctor, Bill and Nardole find themselves in the middle of a war-zone, as Chinese, Russian and American forces stand poised to clash. At the centre of the field of battle is a 5,000-year-old pyramid, and while there are many problems with the situation presented, the Doctor is concerned with only one – there was no pyramid there yesterday. With the three opposing forces promising mutually assured destruction, and every clock in the world counting down to Earth's ruin, an offer of help arrives in the form of a message from an alien race. To avoid annihilation, humanity must willingly become slaves for their would-be saviours. Sci-fi drama, starring Peter Capaldi and Matt Lucas. **8.30 Who Dares Wins.** Nick Knowles challenges two pairs of complete strangers to team up, and battle it out to list as much as they know about a given subject. **9.15 Mrs Brown's Boys.** Agnes looks after a robotic baby that has been given to Dermot and Maria to help them prepare for their new arrival, and Cathy develops a crush on her psychology lecturer. **(R)** **9.45 BBC News: Weather.** National Lottery Update. **10.05 Cliche.** Holly remains suspicious about the cliché, despite now being at its heart, and a climactic encounter during a night out tests friendships – both new and old – to breaking point. **10.50 Cliche.** Holly worst fears are confirmed, just as she is beginning to settle into her new life in Edinburgh, and tensions mount during a party to celebrate Georgia's achievements at Solasta. **11.35 MOTD: FA Cup Final Highlights.** Arsenal v Chelsea. Action from the showpiece match at Wembley Stadium. **12.10 Film: Swingers.** (1996) **1.45 Weather for the Week Ahead.** **1.50 BBC News.**

**BBC2**

**6.15 Film: City Beneath the Sea.** (1970) **7.45 Deborah Kerr: Talking Pictures.** (R) **8.20 Film: The Prisoner of Zenda.** (1952) **10.00 Monty Hall's Great Hebridean Escape.** (R) **11.00 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **12.00 Great British Menu.** **(R) 12.30 Great British Menu.** **(R) 1.00 Great British Menu.** **(R) 1.30 Film: Camelot.** (1967) Musical, starring Richard Harris. **4.20 Flog It!** **(R) 5.00 Nature's Miniature Miracles: Natural World.** Documentary telling how the world's smallest animals manage to survive, revealing how they have evolved extraordinary skills and achieved mindboggling feats. Hugh Dennis narrates. **(R)** **6.00 Golf: PGA Championship.** Eilidh Barbour presents highlights of the third day of the European Tour's flagship event from Wentworth in Surrey. With commentary by Peter Alliss, Ken Brown and Andrew Cotter. **7.00 Mexico: Earth's Festival of Life.** Exploring the wildlife, landscape and culture in three distinct areas of the country. **(R)** **8.00 RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2017.** Coverage of the annual horticultural event, which takes place in the west London district. **9.00 Jane Austen: Behind Closed Doors.** Lucy Worsley embarks on a road-trip across England to visit some of the many places that informed the central themes of home and property in Jane Austen's novels. **10.00 Film: Quartet.** (2012) Three former opera singers prepare for their annual concert to mark Verdi's birthday and raise funds for their retirement home. However, this year, a famous diva has joined the group, and her history with the others threatens the performance. Comedy drama, directed by Dustin Hoffman and starring Maggie Smith, Billy Connolly, Tom Courtenay, Pauline Collins and Michael Gambon. **11.30 Versailles.** William of Orange "tempts" the King to take the field against his Dutch army, so Queen Marie-Thérèse takes charge while Louis XIV is away at war. **(R)** Inside Versailles. **12.30 Film: Easy Money.** (2010) A student, a fugitive and a mob enforcer's lives overlap through their involvement in organised crime. Thriller, with Joel Kinnaman, Matias Varela and Dragomir Mrsic. **2.30 This Is BBC Two.**

**ITV**

**6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockout Street.** **6.10 Bottom Knockout Street.** **(R) 6.25 Sooty.** **(R) 6.35 Signed Street: Share a Story.** **(R) 6.40 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** **(R) 6.50 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** **(R) 7.00 Outdoors.** **(R) 7.05 Super 4.** **(R) 7.20 Marvel Avengers Assemble.** **(R) 7.45 Thunderbirds Are Go.** **(R) 8.10 Ben 10.** **8.25 ITV News.** **8.30 Weekend.** **9.25 The Home Game.** **(R) 10.20 Judge Rinder.** **(R) 11.15 Tipping Point.** **(R) 12.20 ITV News: Weather.** **12.30 Bigheads.** **(R) 1.30 The Chase.** **(R) 2.30 Film: Mission: Impossible.** (1996) Action thriller, starring Tom Cruise. **4.35 Catchphrase.** **(R) 5.20 Britain's Got More Talent.** **6.15 Regional Programme; Weather.** **6.25 ITV News: Weather.** **6.45 Take Me Out.** An account manager from Leeds, a housing executive from Belfast, a professional BMX rider from Portsmouth and an IT manager from Exeter try to impress 30 women and win a date. **8.00 Britain's Got Talent.** The nationwide talent contest's audition phase draws to a close, as Ant and Den bring out one last batch of would-be stars to perform in front of judges Simon Cowell, Alesha Dixon, David Walliams and Amanda Holden. So far, Amanda, Alesha, Simon, and Ant and Dec have all made use of their Golden Buzzer privileges to send four acts directly through to the live semi-finals, with David remaining true to form and holding back on throwing his support behind any one performance until late in the audition process. Regardless, tonight will see the judges pick one last set of performers to bring the total of shortlisted acts to 35, before the elimination process gets under way with the first live semi-final on Monday. **9.20 The Keith and Paddy Picture Show.** Keith Lemon and Paddy McGuinness present their version of Jaws, guest starring Stephen Tompkinson, Myleene Klass and Hank Osasuna. **9.50 Film: Jaws.** (1975) A seaside town's police chief has to deal with a giant killer shark preying on tourists. Steven Spielberg's thriller, starring Roy Scheider. **10.50 ITV News: Weather.** **11.05 Film: Jaws.** (1975) Concluded. **12.25 Jackpot247.** **3.00 Who's Doing the Dishes?** **(R) 3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

**CHANNEL 4**

**6.05 Motor Sport: British Rally Championship.** **6.30 Monaco Historic Grand Prix 2016.** **(R) 7.30 Everybody Loves Raymond.** **(R) 7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond.** **(R) 8.20 Frasier.** **(R) 8.55 Frasier.** **(R) 9.25 Frasier.** **(R) 9.55 Formula 1 Monaco Grand Prix Practice 3 Live.** **11.25 Formula 1 Meets Claire Williams.** **11.55 Formula 1 Monaco Grand Prix Qualifying Live.** **2.30 World's Most Expensive Cars.** **3.30 A Place in the Sun.** Simon Sun. **(R) 4.30 Big House, Little House.** **5.35 Location, Location, Location.** **(R) 6.30 Channel 4 News.** **7.00 The Restoration Man.** George Clarke meets retired businessman Bruce Woodall, who 30 years ago started to restore a Georgian gazebo tower on top of Pembroke's medieval city walls – and has finally taken on the challenge of finishing the job. However, he discovers that since his architect drew up the plans, conservation laws have changed, threatening to shut down the project for good. George unravels this local landmark's 500-year-old secrets, finding its place in key chapters in English and Welsh history – but has the gazebo tower's story finally come to an end? **(R)** **8.00 Walks with My Dog.** Ben Fogle takes his Labrador along the banks of the Thames, beginning in Marlow, while broadcaster Emma Kennedy and her mailpoop puppy visit the Lake District. Plus, Helen Skelton and her dog Barney embark on a voyage of discovery in Dumfries and Galloway, on Scotland so-called "secret coast". **9.00 Film: The World's End.** (2013) A 40-year-old man who refuses to grow up drags four reluctant childhood friends back to their home town to recreate a pub crawl they attempted in their teens. As they work their way round the 12 local bars, they stumble on a threat to the entire human race. Sci-fi comedy, starring Simon Pegg and Nick Frost. **11.10 Film: Die Hard 2.** (1990) A lone cop battles terrorists who have taken over an airport to force the release of a convicted drug baron. Action thriller sequel, starring Bruce Willis and Bonnie Bedelia. **1.25 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA.** **(R) 2.20 The Last Leg.** **(R) 3.15 Hollyoaks.** **(R)**

**CHANNEL 5**

**6.00 Milkshake!** **10.10 The Fairly OddParents.** **(R) 10.45 Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud.** **(R) 11.10 Police Interceptors: Dog Squad.** **(R) 12.05 Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole.** **(R) 1.05 Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole.** **(R) 2.05 Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole.** **(R) 3.05 The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door.** **(R) 4.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** **(R) 5.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** **(R)** **6.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** In Staffordshire, the agents chase up a £3,000 deposit owed by a landlord to his tenant, and officers in Birmingham try to recover £25,000 from a nightclub owner for unpaid solicitor fees. Meanwhile, agents Max and Paul are in Surrey as they attempt to collect more than £3,000 owed to a garage after a customer disputed the repairs made to his van. **(R)** **7.00 Cricket on 5.** England v South Africa. Action from the second one-day in the three-match series, held at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, as the sides warmed up for the ICC Champions Trophy. With commentary from Geoffrey Boycott, Simon Hughes, Michael Vaughan, Graeme Smith and Mark Nicholas. **8.00 5 News Weekend.** **8.05 NCIS: Los Angeles.** Part one of two. The agents investigate when two men are killed at a gun shop, but soon discover one of their colleagues could be at risk. **8.55 NCIS.** The team, alongside the FBI and MI6, continues the international manhunt for a disgraced British spy, while a colleague fights for their life in the ICU. **9.50 NCIS: Act of Vengeance.** Feature-length episode. The team learns in the wake of the terrorist attack, but tries to avenge Kate's death by collecting as much information as possible on An before he does any more damage. Meanwhile, Gibbs learns one of his old flames has been named as the new NCIS director. **(R)** **11.40 Undercover Benefits Cheat.** Paul Connolly goes undercover as a benefits claimant in order to expose fraudsters, beginning with those who claim housing support while subletting. **12.10 SuperCasino.** **3.10 Film: The Punisher.** (1989) **4.40 Access.** **(R) 4.50 House Doctor.** **(R) 5.15 Wildlife SOS.** **(R)**

**DIGITAL**

**BBC Four** **7.00 Saints and Sinners: Britain's Millennium of Monasteries** **8.00 Nature's Great Events** **9.00 Hinterland** **10.30 Top of the Pops: 1983** **12.00 The Joy of the Bee Gees** **1.00 Bee Gees at the BBC and Beyond** **2.00 Boogie Fever: A TOTP2 Disco Special** **3.30 Close** **ITV2** **12.10 Britain's Got More Talent** **1.10 Take Me Out** **2.25 Take Me Out – The Gossip** **3.25 You've Been Framed! Gold Unleashed!** **4.30 Film: Space Chimps** (2008) **5.30 FYI Daily** **5.35 Film: Space Chimps** (2008) **6.10 Film: Red Riding Hood** (2011) **7.10 FYI Daily** **7.15 Film: Red Riding Hood** (2011) **8.15 Scorpion** **9.20 Britain's Got More Talent** **10.20 Celebrity Juice** **11.20 Family Guy** **12.45 American Dad!** **1.15 Film: Bring It On** (2000) **2.15 FYI Daily** **2.20 Film: Bring It On** (2000) **3.00 Teleshopping** **ITV3** **11.50 Jane Eyre** **2.05 Film: Carry On Loving** (1970) **3.15 FYI Daily** **3.30 Film: Carry On Loving** (1970) **4.00 Lewis** **6.00 Rosemary & Thyme** **7.00 Midsomer Murders** **9.00 Doyle's War** **11.10 Law & Order: UK** **2.05 ITV3 Nightscreen** **2.30 Teleshopping** **ITV4** **11.00 The Classic Car Show** **12.00 British Touring Car Championship Highlights** **1.30 ITV Racing Live from Haydock.** Coverage of today's race meetings at Haydock Park, Goodwood and York. **4.30 Pawn Stars** **6.00 Storage Wars** **7.00 The Sweeney** **8.00 Better Late Than Never** **9.00 Film: Gascoigne** (2015) **10.05 FYI Daily** **10.10 Film: Gascoigne** (2015) **10.55 Premiership Rugby Union** **11.55 River Monsters** **1.00 Road Racing Series** **2.00 Fifth Gear** **2.50 ITV4 Nightscreen** **3.00 Teleshopping** **8.4** **12.00 The Goldbergs** **2.30 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts** **2.40 The Big Bang Theory** **6.45 Film: The Three Musketeers** (2011) **9.00 Film: The A-Team** (2010) **11.25 Gogglebox** **1.35 Rude Tube** **2.35 Tattoo Fivers** **3.25 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD** **Film4** **1.00 Casper** (1995) **3.05 Napoleon Dynamite** (2004) **4.55 Johnny English** (2003) **6.35 Beautiful Creatures** (2013) **9.00 The Day After Tomorrow** (2004) A climatologist races across America to rescue his son as freak weather conditions cause devastation around the world. Disaster thriller, starring Jake Gyllenhaal. **11.25 Insidious** (2010) **1.30 The Haunting in Connecticut** (2009) **3.40 Close**

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FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Song for Marion, BBC2, 10.30pm**  
A grouchy old man has always been dismissive of his wife's role in the unconventional local choir. When she is diagnosed with a terminal illness and is no longer able to sing, he reluctantly agrees to take her place, a decision that dramatically changes his life and helps him through the hard times to come. Comedy drama, with Terence Stamp, Gemma Arterton, Vanessa Redgrave and Christopher Eccleston. (2012)

**TUESDAY**  
**Diana, Channel 5, 11.05pm**  
Fact-based drama following the Princess of Wales in the last two years of her life. Under constant media scrutiny, she finds a new public role for herself as a patron of humanitarian causes, while secretly conducting a passionate affair with a Pakistani heart surgeon. Starring Naomi Watts and Naveen Andrews. (2013)



Sliding Doors, Friday, BBC1, 11.25pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Saved from Sorrow: Mysterious Grace, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
A retired police officer, despondent over the deaths of his family, meets a mysterious woman who through her personal stories gives him a reason to rethink what is most important to him. Drama, starring Joey Lawrence, Robin Riker, Muse Watson and Catalina Rodriguez. (2016)

**THURSDAY**  
**Alone in the Wild: Deadly Survival, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
After a plane crash leaves them stranded in the Canadian wilderness, young siblings Hannah and Zach battle all that nature has to throw at them. Alongside trusty dog Chinook, the duo face bears, wolves and a raging wildfire in their bid to find safety. Family drama, starring Natasha Henstridge. (2013)

**FRIDAY**  
**Sliding Doors, BBC1, 11.25pm**  
A London woman's entire future hinges on a seemingly minor but pivotal moment. Comedy drama, presenting two versions of a character's life, starring Gwyneth Paltrow and John Hannah. (1998)

Feeling the strain of a life in the media spotlight

Decades before Donald Trump blurred the lines between politics and pop culture, the Kennedys were America's obsession.

They have everything that the tabloids and gossip writers could want in a family – politics, extraordinary wealth and copious scandals, which makes it easy to see why people continue to crave as much information about them as they can get their hands on.

Of course, there have been countless movies and TV series made about their lives over the years, including, notably, 2016's biographical film Jackie, which earned Natalie Portman an Oscar nomination for Best Actress.

However, not all depictions of the clan have been as well received.

Back in 2011, TV mini-series The Kennedys was slammed even before it aired for taking a sensationalist approach to the story of JFK (Greg Kinnear), his wife Jackie (Katie Holmes), brother Robert (Barry Pepper) and patriarch Joseph (Tom Wilkinson).

Nevertheless, it was a ratings success for broadcaster ReelzChannel, and some critics even came round – Pepper won an Emmy for his performance.

Tonight, the show's sequel The Kennedys: Decline and Fall is premiered on UK TV.

The drama (which was called The Kennedys – After Camelot in the US) is based on a book by J Randy Taraborrelli and picks up in the wake of Bobby's 1968 assassination and goes all the way through to 1994.

Jackie (again played by Holmes, who also directed part of it) is again in mourning, and sniping breaks out between her and the newly widowed Ethel (Kristin Booth).

Robert's brother Ted (the almost unrecognisable Matthew Perry, complete with fake ears, a fake nose and wavy-haired wig) is seen delivering part of the famous eulogy for Bobby.

Indeed, much of the drama focuses on Ted and revisits the awful death of a young woman

named Mary Jo Kopechne, in 1969.

Ted, then a US Senator for Massachusetts, had been at a party with Kopechne and others on the island of Chappaquiddick, on Martha's Vineyard.

Kennedy was behind the wheel in his car with Kopechne when he accidentally drove off a bridge into a pond. Ted escaped, but Kopechne stayed trapped inside the car.

His conduct after the incident, reports of his drinking, women-chasing and controversy surrounding Kopechne's death essentially doomed Kennedy's chances of becoming President himself.

Throughout the drama, we see Ted struggling with the pressure to live up to his brothers' legacies and with his own personal inadequacies.

The second storyline in Decline and Fall has Jackie questioning her tenuous position within the Kennedy family, while also being wooed by and wedding Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis (Alexander Siddig).



The Kennedys: Decline and Fall, Monday, Channel 5, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**May v Corbyn Live: The Battle for Number 10 Channel 4, 8.30pm**

A lot has been made about Theresa May's decision not to participate in a live debate with Jeremy Corbyn and the other leaders of the UK's main political parties ahead of next week's General Election. However, the Prime Minister is not in for an easy ride tonight. In this show, broadcast simultaneously on Channel 4 and Sky News, May and Corbyn will both face questions from the audience via Sky News Political Editor Faisal Islam. Then, in between each Q&A segment, both of the leaders will be interviewed by former Newsnight presenter Jeremy Paxman. If you miss tonight's show, May and Corbyn will be seen on our screens again in a BBC Question Time Special, presented by David Dimbleby, on Friday.

**TUESDAY**  
**Grayson Perry: Divided Britain Channel 4, 9pm**

You can't beat a Grayson Perry documentary - and that was something nobody thought they would ever hear when he began making programmes for Channel 4. After all, he was a potter, not a filmmaker, but he's done the broadcaster proud, devising numerous enthralling shows on a range of

subjects – and this promises to be just as good as its predecessors. In January, he asked viewers to contribute to the making of two pots by asking them their thoughts on Brexit. These were submitted via Twitter, and now we're getting an opportunity to find out how Perry has used them. Not that he's been keeping it a secret - his social media followers have been treated to sneak previews over the weeks, but now we'll be seeing them for the first time in all their glory.

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Fargo Channel 4, 10pm**

The Coen brothers couldn't possibly have imagined that their Oscar-nominated drama set in the snowy wastes of Minnesota would go on to spawn three TV series, but thank goodness it has because the small screen version of Fargo has been a real treat. Each run features new stories and characters, and the latest stars Ewan McGregor in the dual role of brothers Ray and Emmet Stussy. The latter is the state's Parking Lot King, a slick, self-made property mogul and family man; Ray, meanwhile, is a different kettle of fish altogether. Pot-bellied and

balding, he's a parole officer with a chip on his shoulder about the hand in life he's been dealt and blames his sibling for all his problems. There is no love lost between the brothers, and their rivalry is about to wreak havoc in their small town.

**THURSDAY**  
**Frank Skinner on Muhammad Ali BBC1, 9pm**

Last year, millions of fans around the world mourned the passing of Muhammad Ali whose fame and charisma transcended boxing. One of those who grieved him was comedian Frank Skinner, who now gets a chance to pay tribute to his idol with this documentary. Skinner travels across the UK and the US to visit some of the key locations and people in Ali's life, from the next-door neighbour



Frank Skinner on Muhammad Ali, Thursday, BBC1, 9pm

from Louisville, Kentucky, who witnessed the teenager boxer's dedication to his craft, to a bare-knuckle fighter on an Oxfordshire council estate who became one of his dearest friends. Along the way, Skinner learns more about some of the lesser known chapters in Ali's story and finds out just why he became an icon of the civil rights movement and arguably the greatest sporting hero of the 20th-century.

**FRIDAY**  
**Question Time Leaders' Special BBC1, 8.30pm**

With less than a week to go to the General Election, time is running out for the country's politicians to get their points and policies across to the British people. In this programme, which could turn out to be one of the defining moments of the campaign, Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn will feature on the same prime-time edition of Question Time in York. The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition won't be on screen at the same time, but they will be quizzed by the same audience – and David Dimbleby – consecutively. The veteran host will also be in Edinburgh on Sunday, where he will be chairing a second special with Liberal Democrat Tim Farron and the SNP's Nicola Sturgeon.

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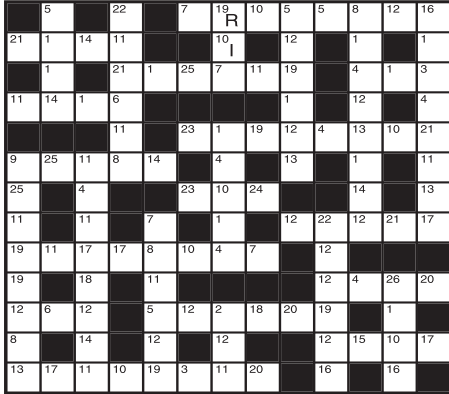
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No.431

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
K	Z	P	E	W	L	F	V	H	I	J	A	Q
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
M	C	U	S	Y	D	O	T	N	G	B	R	X

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

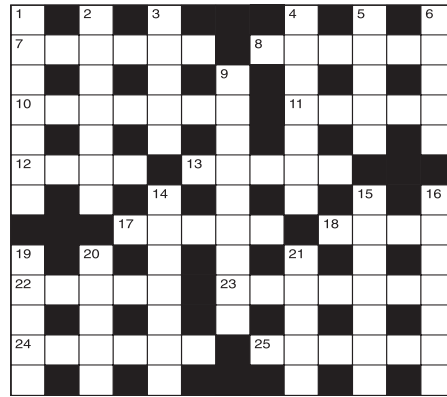
### Cryptic Clues:

### Across

7. Freedom from anxiety shown by some cartographers (6)
8. Give the fellow a blend of tea (6)
10. I've lost various flowers (7)
11. Particular positions that will produce spectacles, we hear (5)
12. This tide occurs at dusk (4)
13. Footwear establishing a record in the Civil Service! (5)
17. A steel fastener put back for the creeper (5)
- 18 & 20Dn. Suffer twinges but work with great care (4,5)
22. Father put back the top card quickly (5)
23. Came out in spots (7)
24. Used by the artist when camping (6)
25. Dislodged from a high perch, one hears (6)

## Down

1. Foresight? (7)
2. Everything still outstanding is not banned (7)
3. Revolutionary film about the capital of Bulgaria (5)
4. So Grace redesigned the bouquet (7)
5. See 14 Down
6. Lets a minimum change take place (5)
7. Needs a pal for a seaside walk (9)
- 14 & 5Dn. Genderous celebration for political group (7,5)
15. Whaling equipment - an instrument with a ring on (7)
- 16 & 21Dn. Chief illumination for pre-eminent personage (7,5)
19. It's not plain imagination (5)
20. See 18 Across
21. See 16 Down



**Quick Clues:**

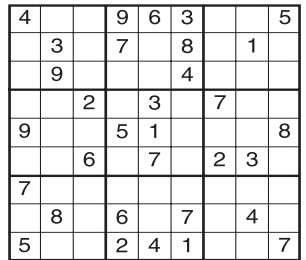
## Across

7. Gateway (6)
8. Roar (6)
10. To storm (7)
11. Domestic task (5)
12. Too (4)
13. Blithe (5)
17. Angry (5)
18. Measure (4)
22. Water lily (5)
23. Upshot (7)
24. Coincide (6)
25. Brandy (6)

Down

1. Ascetic (7)
2. Assure (7)
3. Mortal (5)
4. Quicksilver (7)
5. Blossom (5)
6. Proprietor (5)
9. Desertion (9)
14. Off-hand (7)
15. Tell (7)
16. Protection (7)
19. Remiss (5)
20. Expiate (5)
21. Bench (5)

## Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S  
SOLUTIONS:

5	9	7	8	3	2	4	6	1
2	1	3	6	4	9	5	7	8
6	8	4	7	1	5	9	3	2
9	6	1	4	8	3	2	5	7
7	3	5	2	9	6	8	1	4
8	4	2	1	5	7	3	9	6
3	2	8	9	6	1	7	4	5
1	7	9	5	2	4	6	8	3
4	5	6	3	7	8	1	2	9

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
 CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Stall; 4 Ash pits; 8 Inmates; 9 Tripe; 10 Mite; 11 Relation; 13 Dolt; 14 Deal; 16 Gusted; 17 Idle; 20 Sward; 21 Get into; 22 Set free; 23 Great. Down: 1 Seismologists; 2 Lute; 4 Ape; 5 Lure; 6 Pile; 7 water; 8 initial; 9 Stern-foremost; 12 Flounder; 13 Distant; 15 Beagle; 18 Dense; 19 Stag.  
 QUICK - Across: 1 Decor; 4 Painter; 8 Flatter; 9 Charm; 10 Ewer; 11 Horseman; 13 Earn; 14 Foul; 16 Transfer; 17 Glee; 20 Agate; 21 Lure; 22 Ewer; 23 Lure.  
 Down: 1 Differentiate; 2 Chase; 3 Rota; 4 Parson; 5 Incision; 6 Trammel; 7 Reminiscences; 8 Prospect; 13 Emanate; 15 Letter; 18 Lance; 19 Stop.

## Quiz

1. Of which African country is Brazzaville the capital?
2. Which Greek letter represents the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter?
3. Which Norwegian composer had the middle name Hagerup?
4. With which sport is the English Leander Club associated?
5. Which French author wrote The Human Comedy series of novels?
6. What type of animal is a porcupine?
7. Which poet laureate wrote The Fair Penitent?
8. Membership of which body allows MPs to be called Right Honourable?
9. What nationality was Ivor Novello?
10. Who directed the controversial film Natural Born Killers?

**Last week's solutions:**

**Quiz:** 1 Raven; 2 Darwin; 3 Tin;

4 Thistle; 5 Grozny; 6 11 Downing Street;

7 The Brown Bomber; 8 Muslin; 9 Northwest

Passage; 10 Tony award.

**Niner:** TINDERBOX

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

639972  
7681245  
74572

gives a country,  
gives a second country,  
gives a third country.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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2 days, by coach

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Single room supplements £30pp. Subject to availability.

## THE TOWER of London



Quote Code: KYE728

Selected Saturday departures,  
September - December 2017

### Price Includes...

- ✓ Overnight stay at a 4 star hotel within 20 miles of central London with 3-course dinner and full English breakfast
- ✓ Admission to the Tower of London
- ✓ Free time in London

2 days, by coach

**only £139.95pp**

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# PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY  
GUIDE TO HOME  
BUYING AND  
LETTING

27  
The Chronicle Thursday, May 25, 2017

## Three-bedroomed detached property is on corner plot

A beautifully presented three-bedroom detached family home in Astbury Close, Turnberry, Bloxwich, lies on a corner plot on a popular development.

It is for sale through Goodchilds at £230,000.

A modern and stylish detached property, features include its immaculate lounge with a stone fireplace and a superb open plan kitchen/diner/conservatory.

Approached via a delightful front garden and driveway, this detached property has scope for further extension subject to the necessary permissions.

Internally the property is well presented with a contemporary feel. The lounge has been refurbished and the open plan kitchen/diner and conservatory is ideal for comfortable family living and there is a guest WC.

Upstairs are three bedrooms, an en-suite shower room to the master bedroom and a main bathroom. To the outside is a private and established rear garden.

In more detail the entrance hall has laminate flooring and stairs off.

The lounge is an elegant room with a nature stone fireplace. The kitchen/diner and conservatory is both an excellent entertaining area and a great space for a family to relax in. There is plenty of space for a dining table and chairs and it opens to the conservatory area, which in turn have French doors opening out to the patio area.

On the first floor, bedroom one has a re-fitted en-suite with a shower cubicle, wash basin and low level WC.

Bedroom two is a further double room, while bedroom three is a single room with space for a single bed and a wardrobe.

The bathroom has a contemporary white suite and luxury tiling.

Outside, the rear garden includes a paved area, a lawned area, fenced boundaries and a door accessing the garage.

TURNBERRY £230,000



### TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Goodchilds

TEL: 01922 711444

EMAIL: [bloxwich@goodchilds-uk.com](mailto:bloxwich@goodchilds-uk.com)

### KEY FEATURES

Beautifully presented

Detached

Immaculate lounge with stone fireplace

Superb open plan kitchen/diner/  
conservatory



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## Detached property is located in popular area

**WOLVERHAMPTON**  
**£210,000**

A three-bedroom detached house in a popular residential area in Ainsworth Road, Wolverhampton, is for sale through DB Roberts & Partners at £210,000.

Having off-road parking and a garage, to the ground floor there is a large lounge, a dining kitchen and a conservatory overlooking the garden.

To the first floor there are three good-sized bedrooms and a family bathroom.

It also has double glazing, central heating, an enclosed rear garden with a patio area.

The selling agents are expecting a lot of interest to be shown in the sale of this home, and viewing is highly recommended.

Contact DB Roberts & Partners on 01902 427257.



## Immaculate home with very good transport links

**WALSALL WOOD**  
**£175,000**

<<<

Built by Cameron Homes in 2014, this immaculately presented three-bedroomed mid town house in Lichfield Road, Walsall Wood, is for sale through Goodchilds at £175,000.

A beautifully designed three-bedroom home located in a popular area, it is within easy access of local schools, shops and with excellent transport links to Walsall, Aldridge, Lichfield and the M6 Toll road.

Inside, the property comprises of an entrance hall, a guest cloakroom, the main living area, a superb kitchen/diner with three bedrooms, an en-suite and the main bathroom to the first floor.

Outside is an artificially turfed rear garden and a gate accessing the two allocated parking spaces to the rear. The property benefits from the remaining NHBC warranty.

Call 01543 226655 or see [www.goodchilds-uk.com](http://www.goodchilds-uk.com)

# K. Stuart Swash

## AUCTION - 20TH JUNE 2017



### 9 HOPSTONE GARDENS, PENN.

Quiet cul de sac location. Extended and spacious accommodation, CH., DG., Hall, Cloakroom, 24ft. Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Pantry, fitted Cloaks, Utility, Four Bedrooms, Bathroom, Garage, lovely Rear Garden - open outlook beyond. EPC: D.57

**Guide: £230,000 - £235,000**

VIEWING:  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY,  
26th & 27th MAY 10.30 a.m.



### 36C RICHES STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON

Spacious, Two Reception, Three Bed Semi with Two Bedroomed Garden Annexe and large Outbuilding, double gated entrance driveway. EPC: TBA

**Guide: £115,000 - £120,000**

VIEWING:  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY,  
26th & 27th MAY @ 10.30 a.m.



### 63 PARK ROAD EAST, WOLVERHAMPTON

Ripe for refurbishment. Excellent corner position. Outlook to West Park  
Two Reception, Three Beds, Garage Space.  
EPC: TBA

**Guide: £69,000 - £74,000**

VIEWING:  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY,  
26th & 27th MAY @ 9.30 a.m.



### 13 PEACOCK AVENUE, WEDNESFIELD

Well located for schooling and amenities.  
Spacious Semi, Double Glazing  
Porch, Two Reception, Three Bedrooms,  
Bathroom, attractive Gardens. EPC: E.52

**Guide: £85,000 - £95,000**

VIEWING:  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY,  
26th & 27th MAY @ 11.30 a.m.



### 9 & 9A CROSS STREET, BRIDGTOWN, CANNOCK

Excellent conversion into Two 2-Bed Flats  
Smart Kitchens & Bathrooms, Gas CH, Yard  
area and Parking. EPC: C.70 + D.68

**Guide: £128,000 - £135,000**

VIEWING:  
FRIDAY 26th MAY & WEDNESDAY  
31st MAY @ 11.00 a.m.



### PADDOCK OF FREEHOLD LAND COVEN ROAD, BREWOOD

Well located enclosed Paddock est. 0.5  
acre approx. with Planning Permission for  
erection of Stable Block. Mains Services  
available.

**Guide: £49,000 - £54,000**

VIEWING: FRIDAY 26th MAY &  
WEDNESDAY 31st MAY @ 2.00 p.m.



### 21 CANTERBURY ROAD, PENN

Within an established residential area. Entrance drive, Porch,  
Hall, Two Reception, Kitchen, Pantry, g/f WC, Three Bedrooms,  
Shower Room, WC, Garage, Rear Terrace, Garden approx. 120ft  
in depth. EPC: D.56

**Guide: £165,000 - £175,000**

VIEWING:  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY,  
26th & 27th MAY @ 11.30 a.m.

### PLEASE NOTE:

Viewing of all Lots at  
own risk. Viewings are  
at the times specified so,  
should you arrive late, you  
may find your viewing  
time is limited or that we  
have moved on in order to  
maintain the time schedule.





# House with potential has views of the Arboretum

WALSALL  
£360,000 <<<

In need of upgrading, with immense potential and previous planning permission to extend, this four/five-bedroom detached property backs on to Walsall Arboretum.

With its sale giving an outstanding opportunity to create a substantial family home in a sought-after location, it is for sale through Webbs at offers over £360,000.

A deceptively spacious detached family home, it lies in a cul-de-sac close to all local amenities, in a quiet location and enjoys open views.

Its accommodation briefly comprises a through hallway, a lounge, dining room, dining kitchen, a rear lobby, a guest WC, ground floor bedroom/ sitting room, four bedrooms, a shower room and a generous bathroom. Externally there are generous gardens and a gated driveway providing ample off-road parking.

Call 01922 663399.



# Property is perfect for a young family

PELSALL  
£165,000

In a popular location in Allens Lane, Pelsall, Walsall, this pleasant three-bedroom semi-detached property is the ideal home for a young family.

It is for sale through Skitts at £165,000. With gas central heating and majority double glazing, it has a reception hall, a downstairs WC, a dining kitchen, rear lounge, three bedrooms, a bathroom, integral garage and a rear garden.

The rear lounge has a feature fire surround and stairs off to the first floor. Bedroom one has built-in wardrobes with mirror-fronted sliding doors, bedroom two has a built-in wardrobe and there is a third bedroom. The bathroom has a white suite including a bath with a shower screen and shower over. Contact Skitts on 01922 478104 or visit [www.skitts.net](http://www.skitts.net)



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**WILLENHALL**  
PERRY HALL LANE



**SSTC**  
*Similar Required*

- Spacious Dormer
- Through Hall
- Lounge/Diner
- Kitchen, Utility
- 3 bedrooms
- Driveway
- Garage
- No Chain

**\$140,000**


**AKRON GATE**  
MERCURY DRIVE



- Modern Home
- Lounge, WC
- Generous Kitchen/Diner
- 3 Bedrooms
- Ensuite to Master
- Bathroom
- Gardens

**\$140,000**

**NEWTOWN**  
STAFFORD ROAD



- Traditional Family Home
- Guests WC, Conservatory
- 2 Reception Rooms
- Refitted Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Shower

**OFFERS OVER \$350,000**

**NEW** **PELSALL**  
WHITE HOLLIES




- Detached Family Home
- Through Hall, WC
- Lounge/Diner
- 3 Bedrooms
- En-Suite
- Bathroom
- Garage
- NO CHAIN

**\$214,950**

**NEW** **BLOXWICH**  
SANSTONE CLOSE






- Generous Build
- Hall, 2 Reception Rooms
- Breakfast Kitchen
- 3 Double Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Garage
- Driveway
- Viewing Recommended

**\$265,000**

**NEW** **PELSALL**  
CLOCKMILL ROAD




- Extended Semi
- L-Shaped Lounge
- Dining Room
- Extended Kitchen
- Conservatory
- WC, 3 Bedrooms
- Gardens
- Garage to Rear

**\$159,950**

**WALSALL**  
MINEWOOD CLOSE






- Stunning Extended Detached
- Kitchen Diner,
- Generous lounge,
- Conservatory,
- Three Bedrooms
- Refitted Shower Room.
- low Maintenance Garden
- Block Paved Driveway.
- INTERNAL VIEWING ESSENTIAL

**\$194,950**



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**Walsall**  
**01922 711444**  
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**Lichfield Road, Rushall**

- One Bedroom Flat
- Above Retail Premises
- Lounge
- Kitchen
- Bathroom
- DHSS Accepted
- Rating: 10
- DHSS Accepted

**£300.00 PCM**

**The Exchange, Bloxwich**

- First Floor One Bedroom Flat
- Above Retail Premises
- Bloxwich High Street Location
- Lounge/Kitchen
- Rating: 13
- DHSS Accepted

**£350.00 PCM**

**The Exchange, Bloxwich**

- One bedroom
- Entrance Hallway
- Large Separate Kitchen
- Electric Heating
- Double Glazing
- Rating: 7
- DHSS Accepted
- Sorry No Pets

**£400.00 PCM**

**High Street, Bloxwich**

- One Bed Top Floor Apartment
- Bloxwich Town Centre
- Parking to Rear
- Lounge
- Above Retail Premises
- Fitted Kitchen
- Rating: TBC
- DHSS Accepted

**£400.00 PCM**

**Fisher Road, Bloxwich**

- One Bedroom Ground
- Off Road Parking
- Enclosed Rear Garden
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Communal Entrance
- Recently Fitted Shower Room
- Off Road Parking
- Rating: 69
- DHSS Accepted, No Pets or Smokers

**£400.00 PCM**

**Victoria Avenue, Bloxwich**

- One Bedroom Flat
- Above Retail Premises
- Private Entrance
- Lounge
- Rating: 26
- DHSS Accepted

**£400.00 PCM**

**Thornbury Road, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom 1st Floor Apartment
- Entrance Hallway
- Open Plan Kitchen/Lounge
- Bathroom with Shower
- Allocated Parking Space
- Electric Heating
- Sorry No DHSS
- Rating: 69

**£450.00 PCM**

**Walker Road, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom 2nd Floor Apartment
- Large 'L' shape Lounge
- Open Plan Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Allocated Parking Space
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Secure Entrance
- DHSS Accepted
- Rating: 82

**£475.00 PCM**

**Marton Court, High street**

- One Bedroom
- Bloxwich High Street
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- DHSS Accepted
- Rating: 68

**£400.00 PCM**

**Walker Road, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom 1st Floor Apartment
- Open Plan Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Family Bathroom & Ensuite
- Allocated Parking
- Off Road Parking
- Rating: 85
- DHSS Accepted

**Monthly Rental Of £475.00**

**Walker Road, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom First Floor Apartment
- Open Plan Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Allocated Parking
- Rating: 86
- DHSS Accepted

**£475.00 PCM**

**Valley Road, Walsall**

- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- Ample Off Road Parking
- Rating: 69
- DHSS Accepted

**£525.00 PCM**

**Lammermoor Avenue, Birmingham**

- Spacious Two Bedroom Flat
- Entrance Balcony Area
- Lounge/Diner
- Fitted Kitchen
- Modern Bathroom
- Communal Parking Area
- Rating: 14
- No DHSS

**£530.00 PCM**

**Pargeter Street, Walsall**

- Two/Three Period Terrace
- Refitted Kitchen
- Lounge
- Three/Reception Room
- Rating: 59
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers.

**£550.00 PCM**

**Coxmoor Close, Turnberry Estate**

- Two Bedroom Terrace
- Popular Turnberry Location
- New Flooring Throughout
- Through Lounge
- Kitchen
- New Boiler
- Rating: 66
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

**£595.00 PCM**

**Kenilworth Crescent, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom End Terraced Property
- Entrance Hallway
- Fitted Kitchen
- Off Road Parking
- Rating: 76
- DHSS Accepted

**£525.00 PCM**

**Vernon Way, Walsall**

- Two/Three Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- Two Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Master Bedroom with en-suite
- Off Road Parking
- Rating: 46
- No DHSS

**£725.00 PCM**

**Green Lane, Sheffield**

- Four Double Bedrooms
- Two En-Suite Bathrooms
- Conservatory
- Guest W.C.
- Loft Conversion Room
- Garage
- Rating: 70
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers.

**£900.00 PCM**

**Woodbridge Close, Turnberry**

- Four bedroom detached
- Entrance Hallway
- Dining Room
- Utility and Conservatory
- Ensuite Shower Room
- Garage
- Rating: 53
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

**£950.00 PCM**

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**Larchmere Drive, Essington, WV11**  
**£300,000**

3	4
2	EPC E

**Albany Grove, Essington, WV11**  
**£240,000**

2	4
2	EPC E

**Pooles Lane, Short Heath, WV12**  
**£205,000**

2	3
1	EPC D

**Wayside Gardens, Willenhall, WV12**  
**£175,000**

2	3
1	EPC D

**Conway Crescent, Willenhall, WV12**  
**£169,950**

2	3
1	EPC D

**Kewstoke Road, Sneyd Park, WV12**  
**£169,950**

2	3
1	EPC D

**Stubbington Close, Willenhall, WV13**  
**£160,000**

1	2
1	EPC D

**Longwood Rise, Willenhall, WV12**  
**£145,000**

1	2
1	EPC D

**Thorne Road, Willenhall, WV13**  
**£140,000**

1	2
1	EPC C

**Essington Way, Wolverhampton, WV1**  
**£125,000**

1	3
1	EPC C

**Spindle Tree Rise, Willenhall, WV12**  
**£120,000**

1	2
1	EPC C

**Lilac Grove, Bentley, WS2**  
**Guide Price £90,000**  
**AUCTION**

2	2
1	EPC D

**Keysmith Close, Willenhall, WV13**  
**£90,000**

1	2
1	EPC C

**Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, WV13**  
**£85,000**

1	2
1	EPC C



**LOT 1 Glebe Place Darlaston**  
**25th May, 1st and 5th June all at 10am**



Situated in a quiet cul-de-sac, this traditionally styled end of terrace property benefits from gas central heating and double glazing but is in need of further modernisation and improvement. With all amenities close at hand, the property has a good size rear garden and comprises of the following:- Tenure Freehold Ground Floor Front door leads to Reception Hall with stairs off and store m x cupboard, door to Lounge 3.86m x 3.07m plus double glazed bay window, Kitchen 3.87m x 3.43m, Lobby with access to W.C. and useful Store, First Floor Staircase leads to Landing providing access to Bedroom One (rear) 4m x 3.09m, Bedroom Two (front) 3.36m x 3.4m, Bedroom Three (front) 2.4m x 2.4m, Bathroom 1.8m x 1.4m, Outside Fore and good size Rear Garden.

●Guide Price **£55,000 PLUS**

**LOT 2 Skip Lane Walsall**  
**Tuesday 30th May 12pm**



Situated in one of South Walsall's most desirable locations, this traditionally styled, semi detached property is in need of modernisation but offers tremendous scope for improvement. Set within substantial mature gardens, the property is conveniently located for all amenities and offers well planned spacious living accommodation, with the benefit of gas central heating and double glazing and needs to be viewed internally to appreciated fully.

●Guide Price **£240,000 PLUS**

**LOT 4 Rockingham Close Bloxwich**  
**There will be no viewings at the property**



Purpose built ground floor flat situated close to Bloxwich centre with all facilities provided. Sold subject to an Assured Shorthold Tenancy from 7th December 2016 for 6 months at £395.00 PCM. The accommodation comprises:- Tenure:Leasehold Accommodation: Reception Hall, Lounge 3.8m x 3.2m, Kitchen 2.4m x 2.2m with sink unit, drainer, base and wall cupboards, electric oven and hob, Bedroom One 3.1m x 2.5m with night storage heater and window to front, Bedroom Two 3.1m x 2.3m with window to front, Bathroom .

●Guide Price **£55,000 PLUS**

**LOT 5 Highland Road Erdington**  
**24th May 11am and 31st May 11am**



This three bedroom semi detached property is in need of modernisation. The property is situated in a popular residential area and is within walking distance of both Erdington town centre and train station. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Ground Floor Front reception room (3.9m x 3.1m), Reception Room two (4.9m x 3.2m), Kitchen (4.9m x 1.8m), Lean to (4.5m x 1.8m) First Floor Bedroom one with window to front (3.9m x 2.3m), Bedroom two (4.1m x 2.5m), Bedroom three (3.3m x 1.9m), Bathroom (2.1m x 1.6m)

●Guide Price **£115,000 PLUS**

**LOT 7 Harden Close Bloxwich**  
**23rd May and 30th May 10:30am**



This ground floor maisonette is in need of modernisation throughout. The property is situated in a popular residential area a short distance from both Bloxwich and Walsall town centre's. This property is ideally suited towards an investor and with all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Tenure Leasehold Ground Floor Lounge (5.1m x 4.3m), Kitchen (3.3m x 1.9m), Bedroom one (3.5m x 3.3m), Bedroom two (2.8m x 2.4m), Bathroom (1.8m x 1.6m).

●Guide Price **£25,000 PLUS**

**LOT 8 10 Rockingham Close Bloxwich**  
**23rd May and 30th May 10am**



This two bedroom first floor flat is ideally situated in Bloxwich town centre. The property is within walking distance of Bloxwich high street making it an ideal purchase for an investor. The property requires little modernisation and with all amenities close at hand it comprises: Accommodation Lounge/Kitchen (5.6m x 3.2m), Bedroom one (2.5m x 2.2m), Bedroom two (2.7m x 2.5m), Bathroom (1.9m x 1.7m)

●Guide Price **£57,000 PLUS**

**LOT 9 Beacon Road Walsall**  
**By appointment through auctioneers**



Situated on a prominent corner plot between Beacon Road and Skip Lane in one of Walsall's most sought after locations, this substantial detached property is set on a good size plot and offers a unique opportunity for potential redevelopment. Planning Permission has already been granted (Application No:16/1835 Walsall Council) for ground and first floor extensions to both front and rear. The existing property, which boasts many of it's original features, offers spacious well planned living accommodation.

●Guide Price **£450,000 PLUS**

**LOT 10 Sandwell Street Walsall**  
**23rd May and 30th May 11am**



This two bedroom terraced property is in need of modernisation. The property is situated a short distance from Walsall town centre and the A34 which offers a direct transport link into Birmingham. This property is ideally suited towards investors and with all amenities close at hand it comprises: Ground Floor Lounge (3.6m x 3.6m), Reception Room (3.6m x 3.6m), Kitchen (3.2m x 1.5m), Bathroom (2.1m x 1.4m) First Floor Bedroom one with window to front (4.1m x 3.6m), Bedroom two (4.1m x 3.6m) Outside At the rear of the property there is a small yard.

●Guide Price **£73,000 PLUS**

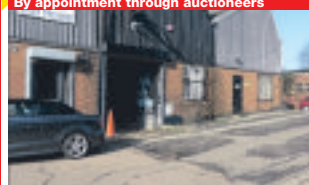
**LOT 11 Kings Court, Bridge Street Walsall**  
**By appointment through Auctioneers**



This one bedroom ground floor flat is suited in the heart of Walsall town centre. The property requires little modernisation and would ideally be suited towards an investor. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Tenure Leasehold Accommodation Lounge (5.1m x 4.6m), Kitchen (3m x 3m), Bathroom (1.9m x 1.7m), Bedroom (5.1m x 2.4m). Buyers Premium A Buyers Premium of £300.00 inc v.a.t. will be charged.

●Guide Price **£46,000 PLUS**

**LOT 11a Sapcote Business Centre Small Heath Highway**  
**By appointment through auctioneers**



Situated in Sapcote business centre this premises provides open plan ground floor warehouse accommodation. The premises is ideally located just 2.5 miles from Birmingham town centre and a short distance from the M42, which offers a great transport link to the NEC and Birmingham International Airport. The premises is accessed via an electrically operated roller shutter door (width 2.67m x height 3.05m) and with a working height of 4.27m it offers great potential for an investor. Tenure Freehold Accommodation 1,484 sq.ft/137.89 sq.m

●Guide Price **£70,000 PLUS**

**LOT 12 Broadway North Walsall**  
**26th May and 2nd June 3pm**



et on a good size corner plot between Broadway North and Brookhouse Road, this traditionally styled detached property offers a perfect development opportunity to purchase one of Walsall's most prestigious and sought after locations. Set back behind a deep lawned foregarden, flanked by ample off street parking, all amenities are close at hand and the property includes gas centrally heating and double glazing.

●Guide Price **£260,000 PLUS**

**LOT 14 The Linney Ludlow**  
**25th May 3.00 pm**



This Grade II listed semi-detached 3 bedroom stone period home is located in a popular location. . The property is located just off Ludlow's historic town centre, within easy walking distance and reach of all the town's amenities.

●Guide Price **£200,000 PLUS**

**LOT 15 Spring Court, Birmingham Road Walsall**  
**30th May 3pm, 6th June 11am**



This purpose built ground floor flat is situated in a popular residential area just off Birmingham Road in need of modernisation and improvement, making an ideal purchase for an investor. Cash offers are invited.

●Guide Price **£55,000 PLUS**

**LOT 15a Golden Hillock Road Sparkbrook**  
**24th May 12:30pm and 26th May 12pm**



This three bedroom mid terraced property is in need of total modernisation. The property is situated in a popular residential area and is a short distance from the A45 which provides an easy transport link into central Birmingham. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Accommodation 2 reception rooms, kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. Outside The property is accessed from the pavement with enclosed rear garden.

●Guide Price **£85,000 PLUS**

**LOT 16a Lambourne Close Great Wyrley**  
**By appointment through auctioneers**



Situated in a prime cul-de-sac this 4 bedroom semi detached has been totally refurbished. The property is located in the heart of Great Wyrley Village and offers great potential for both home owners and investors. Purchasers are advised to check the mining report. Ground Floor Guest cloakroom, Lounge, Conservatory, Kitchen, Dining area, Laundry Room, First Floor Master Bedroom with ensuite shower room, Bedroom two, Bedroom three, Family Bathroom. Outside At the front of the property there is a drive way with access to a garage.

●Guide Price **£140,000 PLUS**

**LOT 17 Lower Maisonette, Norton Terrace Norton Canes**  
**24th May 4:30pm and 31st May 9:30am**



Situated in a popular residential area a short walk from both Norton Canes high school and Chasewater Country park, this ground floor maisonette requires little work. The property is ideally suited towards both home owners and investors. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Tenure Leasehold Ground Floor Bedroom one (3m x 2m), Bathroom (1.9m x 1.6m), Kitchen (3m x 2m), Reception Room (5.9m x 3.2m), Bedroom two (3.3m x 3.1m), Bedroom three (3.8m x 3m)

●Guide Price **£60,000 PLUS**

**LOT 19 Dudley Road Oldbury**  
**By appointment through Auctioneers**



This three bedroom Link Detached property is situated on the popular Dudley Road a short distance from Oldbury town centre. The property is in need of total modernisation and would be ideally suited towards an investor. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Ground Floor Lounge (3.6m x 3.5m), Rear reception room (4m x 3.3m), Kitchen (3m x 2.1m), Bathroom (2.9m x 2.4m), Cellar (3.7m x 3.5m) First Floor Bedroom one (3.6m x 3.5m), Bedroom two (4m x 3.3m), Second Floor Bedroom three (4.1m x 3.5m) Outside. At the rear of the property there are multiple out houses as well as a patch of grass.

●Guide Price **£90,000 PLUS**

**LOT 22 Pommel Close Walsall**  
**30th May 3:30pm and 6th June 11:30am**



This gas centrally heated and double glazed first floor maisonette would make an ideal opportunity for an investor (potential rental income circa £5,000 per annum). Situated at the head of a quiet cul-de-sac, the property is in need of slight improvement and comprises of the following:- Tenure Leasehold

●Guide Price **£40,000 PLUS**

**LOT 23 Ogley Road Walsall**  
**25th May, 1st, 5th June 11am**



Within a stone's throw of Brownhills Town Centre in a popular location, this traditional semi detached property has gas central heating and double glazing. Set back from the road behind a foregarden and driveway with off street parking, the property is conveniently located and would make an ideal purchase for investor/builder. The accommodation comprises:- Tenure Freehold Ground Floor Front door leads to Reception Hall with stairs off and door to Lounge 4.13m x 3.45m, door to Kitchen 3.35m x 3.12m with access to Lobby with W.C. First Floor Staircase leads to Landing with doors off to Bedroom One (front) 3.4m x 2.94m, Bedroom Two (rear) 2.94m x 3.1m, Bedroom Three (front) 2.2m x 2.08m, Bathroom 2m x 1.7m, Outside Foregarden, small side Verandah, Enclosed Rear Gardens.

●Guide Price **£92,500 PLUS**

●Guides are provided as an indication of each seller's minimum expectation. They are not necessarily figures which a property will sell for and may change at any time prior to the auction. Each property will be offered subject to a Reserve (a figure below which the Auctioneer cannot sell the property during the auction) which we expect will be set within the Guide Range or no more than 10% above a single figure Guide.



# Subtle, contemporary styling added to its core values of pace and elegance

By John Griffiths

**It has space and comfort in abundance combined with a raft of the latest technology – plus a powerful but efficient engine.**

Add to that sublime ride comfort and you can see why the latest Mercedes-Benz E-Class has driven off with so many awards, including the UK's Car of the Year, Company Car of the Year and Best Executive Car awards.

It won praise from the Car of the Year jury as one of the safest and most advanced cars in its category.

The test car was the E350 estate, powered by a six cylinder, 3.0 litre turbo diesel engine, in sporty AMG Line trim with a list price of just over £48,000.

It combines that essential Mercedes ambience of calm and luxury, but with the AMG styling adding subtle contemporary features such as carbon fibre and brushed aluminium to complement the aircraft-like instrument panel. It includes one of the largest, clearest info/control colour screens in the business.

It's particularly attractive at night, when the subtle blue mood lighting illuminates the driver and passenger positions without impacting on your night vision.

This, together with the car's plush leather seats and cossetting ride, it creates an impressive blend of classic luxury with advanced safety technology and driver aids.

The attention to detail is equally impressive, like the large split screen reversing camera which gives wide, clear views even at night. Or the blind spot monitoring – a red triangle appears in the wing mirror as another vehicle enters the blind spot, but only if you operate the indicator at that moment, signalling to pull out, do you get an audible alarm as well.

The parking brake automatically releases as soon as you press the starter button, while one finger on the column lever is enough to selection forward or reverse (or 'park' when you stop). There are up/down 'paddles, too, but the transmission is so smooth and responsive I only felt the need to use them to downchange for extra engine braking on steep inclines.

These are two of the 'little' things which add up to a lot. There are more complex driver aids too, such as speed limiter, adaptive cruise control and a system which recognises road signs and automatically limits your speed to the posted limit.

Such things are important – if you want to avoid points

and a big fine – in a car which almost conceals its powerful nature, so easy and smooth is its progress.

The three-litre diesel sends 258PS and a whopping 620Nm of torque to the rear wheels, enough to propel it to 62mph in six seconds.

With a nine-speed automatic transmission it operates on a narrow rev range (unless you hit 'kick down' for an overtake) of between 1,400 and 1,600 revs so actual changes are imperceptible. That helps keeps noise level to a minimum, of course, but it's also on the cusp of peak torque so the big estate is ready to surge forward instantly when necessary.

But perhaps waft would be a better word: you will be pressed back in your seat by determined acceleration but in normal driving the car belies its size with easily accessible, almost lazy power.

## Stable

Suspension settings are adjustable from comfort to dynamic, but for such a big car it feels stable through the twisty bits at any sensible speed and it simply glides along motorways.

And it is a big car: It seats five in comfort with up to 1,820 litres of cargo space thanks to split/fold rear seats. Head and elbow room in the rear are best in class, despite the lower roofline which gives the estate a sleeker, sportier appearance and has, no doubt, improved the car's aerodynamic efficiency, bringing benefits in noise levels and fuel efficiency.

The official fuel average is 48.7mpg, which I came almost surprisingly close to matching in real world driving. The CO2 rating is a competitive 151g/km.

The most popular E-Class Estates, though, are likely to be the E200 and E220d. The first costs under £40,000 in the same AMG Line trim and is a model of efficiency for the company car driver – 67.3mpg and 109g/km of CO2. The E220 costs £41,000 and boasts the same economy figures.

Coming soon will be the performance option, with the full AMG treatment – a 3.0 litre V6 bi-turbo turning out 401bhp.

All E-Class cars and estates are comprehensively equipped, and offer the space and technology which makes them a serious rival for upmarket SUVs. The new versions bring subtle, contemporary styling to add to the core Mercedes values of pace and elegance.



The Mercedes-Benz E-Class is one of the safest and most advanced cars in its category

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## Go wild with this MINI and roof-mounted pop-up tent!



MINI has stolen a march on many of its compact SUV rivals with a new accessory – a roof-mounted, pop-up tent.

The £2,400 sleeping area can be easily clipped on to the MINI Countryman's roof rails like a normal luggage box – but release two clips and it pops up using gas pressure springs into a tent ready to accommodate two adults.

It comes with a fold-up aluminium ladder for easier access, plus a mattress, two zip-opening windows and doors and a close mess mosquito net.

The Airtop tent was designed by MINI in conjunction with Autohome, the Italian roof tent specialists, to clip on to the MINI

Countryman's standard roof rails for owners who want to get out into the wild – or fancy a weekend at a music festival.

Unlike some SUV rivals all versions of the Countryman, which was revamped this spring and had a new performance flagship added to the family, can be bought with four wheel drive (an extra £1,600 over the base price).

Prices for the entry level model start at £22,465. The new performance flagship is the four wheel drive John Cooper Works model, costing from £30,875 and powered by a 2.0 litre petrol engine, capable of tackling the 0 to 62mph dash in just 6.5 seconds. Top speed (if you find yourself on an autobahn) is 145mph.



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www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

**5**

**Business & Farming**

**business opportunities**

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

**6**

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**accommodation to let**

**1900**  
Accommodation

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Includes Most Bills  
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**7**

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Most importantly, we make a difference to peoples lives every day by providing a safe, reliable door-to-door service for those who are unable to use conventional public transport.

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To apply for one of these positions, please call us on:

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Closing date for applications is 1st June 2017.

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**8**

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MoT Jan 2018, red.

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£2,600 o.n.o.  
07984 207513.

**NISSAN NOTE 1.4S**

Blue, petrol manual, 2007, 2 owners from new, 53k, long MoT, economical/reliable.

**Bargain £1,750 ono.**  
07477 9544207 Great Wyrley.

Accessable Transport Group is the leading provider of accessible transport services in the West Midlands. We have 8 depots, operate 600 vehicles and employ over 950 staff for our Ring and Ride service, home-to-school contracts and Igo bus routes.

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**9**

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**public & legal notices**

**LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES**  
For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to **Marie Hogg** on 01902 713146 or email **marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk** (remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

**BRONA MARY DOYLE (Deceased)**  
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 77 Merton Way Pleck Walsall West Midlands WS2 2JG, who died on 24/12/2016, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned on or before 29/07/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.

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(Ref: ZLUP9443599P/Doyle) 7502355

**Walsall Council, Planning, Engineering and Transportation**  
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) act 1990 Development Management Procedure Order 2015 (as amended)

The below applications have been made to the Walsall Council. Applications can be viewed at First Stop Shop, Civic Centre, Walsall or online [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk)

planning. Representations can be made online, email: [planning-services@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:planning-services@walsall.gov.uk) or in writing to Head of Planning and Building Control, Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1DG. Representations should be made within 21 days of the date of this notice. Please note: Your letter and personal details will form part of the planning file which is a public document and will be available for inspection at the Council Offices. The information may be released as part of a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

**16/0935** Subway FOR: 1 x INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN AND 1 x INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED PROJECTING SIGN (RETROSPECTIVE) AT: 44, PARK STREET, WALSALL, WS1 1NG

**17/0938** Gul Nawaz FOR: CHANGE OF USE FROM A1 (RETAIL) TO A5 (HOT FOOD TAKEAWAY) AT: 46, IDA ROAD, WALSALL, WS2 9SS

**17/0540** Mr Peter Holloway FOR: AMENDMENT TO PLANNING PERMISSION 16/1056 - ERECTION OF DETACHED GARAGE AT: 167, PINFOLD LANE, WALSALL, WS9 0QY

**17/0485** St Francis Group (Aldridge) Ltd FOR: A HYBRID APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SITE:

- A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF ALL BUILDINGS AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE LAND FROM GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B2) TO A MIXED USE OF LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B1), GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B2) AND STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION (CLASS B8) AND FOR THE ACCESS OF MIDDLEMORE LANE, THE INTERNAL ROAD LAYOUT AND THE DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.
- AN OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF UP TO 22,703SQ.M. OF NEW BUILDINGS, THE PROVISION OF ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, SERVICES AND CIRCULATION AREAS, LANDSCAPING OF THE SITE, SPORTS POND AND ALL OTHER ASSOCIATED WORKS (OTHER THAN THOSE DETAILED WITHIN THE FULL PLANNING APPLICATION), AT: MCKECHNIE BRASS LTD, MIDDLEMORE LANE, ALDRIDGE, WALSALL, WS9 8SP

**17/0930** Dajit Sandhu FOR: CHANGE OF USE OF GROUND FLOOR FROM OPTICIANS (A1) TO CAFE (A3) AND INSTALLATION OF EXTERNAL EXTRACTION FLUE: AT: 10, HAWES CLOSE, WALSALL, WS1 3HG

**10**

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MALE, 50s, slim, OHAC, from Wolverhampton, looking for a fun lady for a no-strings relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420265

MALE, 60s, 5ft10, slim build, looking to meet female, for a mature adult relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426053

YOUNG looking 63 year old male, GSOH, friendly, considerate, attractive, looking for a naughty female, any age/status, for adult fun and friendship. AKA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425243

32 year old male looking for a nice lady for fun, maybe more. Text only. Mailbox: 5831443

GENT 48, youthful outlook, likes countryside, keep fit, karaoke, seeks soul mate for fun times. N. Shropshire. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 408411

GENUINE 56yr old male, divorced, OHAC, looking for nice lady for friendship, maybe more. Wolverhampton. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417601

YOUNG 60 West Midlands male, 5ft 6, 65kg, GSOH, GSOH, broadminded, seeking an honest sexy lady for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426621

MALE N/S, honest, GSOH, car owner, seeks female, 55-70 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416817

CARING male, 63, N/S, GSOH, genuine likes music, travel, meals out, casual drink, seeks female, 50-70 for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416991

EASYGOING male, 63, genuine, N/S, seeks female, 50-70 for friendship and romance. Likes occasional drink, eating in/out, cinema and driving. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418893

SINGLE male, n/s, likes music, films, driving, nights in, dining out, trips, WLTW lady, 50-70, looks unimportant, for friendship and relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424927

GENTLEMAN wishes to meet nice lady 45-60. West Midlands area. My interests are meals out, daytrips, music and reading. Text only. Mailbox: 5817771

GENUINE Stoke male 50s, friendly and easygoing, enjoys weekends away, seeks slim attractive female 35 to 50 for friendship. Text only. Mailbox: 5817202

MARK, single, 6ft, blue eyes, dark hair, lots of interests, sport, music, cinema, long walks, eating out, looking to meet that special lady. If that sounds like you please get in touch! Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426461

SLIM male, blue eyes, dark hair, seeking that special lady. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415697

I enjoy the great outdoors with the dog, 36 years old, mature with a caring nature looking for a female age 28-48 for friendship, possible relationship. Text only. Mailbox: 5803943

CARING male, 6ft, blue eyes, slim, dark hair, honest, loving, caring, earthy, likes sport, cinema, meals out, seeking special lady. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 409803

IAN, 5ft6, looking for somebody, 18-60, for general good fun times, days out, nights out, meals, sightseeing and visiting various parts of the country. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426437

MALE 45 6ft, blue eyes, dark hair, slim, dark blond hair, blue eyes, WLTW a lady 30-45 to spend some time together for friendship. Text only. Mailbox: 5800702

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U-13s high jump winner Jolyon Davis, of Wolverhampton & Bilston AC



High jump judges get out the measuring tape



Competitors warm up before the start of the championships



Steve Hollis, Tamworth, competes in the men's javelin



Long jumper Isabelle Kelly, aged 15, for Cannock & Stafford

# Records tumble as championship returns to city

**RECORDS** were shattered as more than 300 athletes descended on Wolverhampton for the Staffordshire County Track and Field Championships.

For the first time in almost 30 years, Aldersley Stadium played host to an event which sees the region's best go head-to-head.

Host club Wolverhampton & Bilston watched three of its junior stars set new records en route to victory – in the year the club celebrates its 50th birthday. Jolyon Davies, in the under-13 high jump, Molly Walsh, in the junior women's hammer (4kg) and Phoebe Baggott in the under-15 girls hammer (3kg) all went higher and further than any athletes in those category before.

Club president Mary Harding said: "It has not been held here for many years and usually would be held at Stoke or Cannock, so to welcome it back in our 50th year was very special. "It was wonderful to be able to bring it back. There were many great performances."

Davies, who also took victory in the u-13 shot competition, achieved a height of 1.51m in the high jump, which set a new record in the category.

Walsh meanwhile set a new record in junior women's hammer with a distance of 53.15m, while Baggott threw 56.43m in the u-15s girls' hammer.

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Clare Butler

*"To welcome it back in our 50th year was very special. It was wonderful. There were many great performances."*

A busy day of action featured athletes from clubs including Tipton Harriers, Stone Master Marathoners, Cannock & Stafford and Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers.

Tipton enjoyed early success thanks to Alexia Bennett-Cordy, who won the u-15 75m hurdles in 11.7 seconds.

Cannock & Stafford's Amy Pye showed her versatility with victory in both the u-17 80m hurdles and 300m, before club-mates Chloe Wilde and Natalie Ainge won the women's junior and senior 400m races respectively. Wilde with a new championship record time of 64.8 seconds.

Travis Christie gave the home club something to celebrate, coming home ahead of the field in the men's senior 400m, while Cannock's strong afternoon continued with a one-two in the men's u-17 800m final as Joshua Ward led home team-mate Bill Chesters.

Wolverhampton & Bilston took the top three positions in the u-15 girls 800m with Aliya Westwood finishing

in front of Lucy Semple and Jessica Moore and then proceeded to dominate the 1500m races at u-15 level, with Alfie Oliver winning the men's and Ella Semple the girls.

The sprints saw Cannock & Stafford's Chloe Lindop lead home the field in the junior women's 100m, while Derrion Thompson won the senior race – she also won the senior 200m event.

Wolverhampton & Bilston's Alexander James Nwenwo ran 11.4 seconds to win the men's senior 100m. Club-mate Donovan James took the 200m race in 23.1 seconds.

A distance of 5.24m was enough for Wolverhampton & Bilston's Sophie Worrall to win the women's senior long jump.

Cannock & Stafford athletes impressed in the javelin, with Rebecca Scott taking victory in the senior event and Bethan Rees the junior. Emma Douras of Dudley & Stourbridge won the senior high jump competition.



Birchfield Harriers' Archie England in the u-13s javelin



Alexia Bennett-Cordy, for Tipton, in the 80m hurdles

## Rutter roars home to show true quality

BRIERLY Hill race Michael Rutter rolled back the years, demonstrating why he remains one of the world's greatest road racers by securing his 14th North West 200 win.

The victory moved Rutter, at the age of 45, to third on the all-time winners list at the famous North Irish triangular circuit, sandwiched between late, greats Joey Dunlop and his brother Robert.

He started the week in superb form, taking pole for the two Superbike races on Saturday – lapping the course at 122.345mph, his fastest ever around the 8.9-mile circuit – and was second on the grid for the opening Superstock and Supertwin races on the Thursday.

The Bathams/SMT Racing BMW rider would also eventually go on to secure two stunning second-place finishes and a third, added to his win, meant he had been on the podium in four out of his six races.

The results meant Rutter moved up to an astonishing 31 podiums, which has only been bettered by Alastair Seeley.

Rutter now heads to Donington Park for round four of the National Superstock 1000 Championship, this weekend, May 27-28, before making the trip across the Irish Sea for the Isle of Man TT races.

## Service in memory of rugby club stalwart

A SERVICE of thanksgiving will be held next week for Stourbridge rugby stalwart John Jeavons-Fellows following his death at the age of 78.

Described as a 'leading light' in the Lions for the past 60 years, the popular official passed away peacefully in his sleep last Tuesday.

A former pupil of King Edward Grammar School, Jeavons-Fellows began playing for Stour's first team aged 18. At 19 he organised the club's first ever tour and was later appointed captain. After hanging up his boots, Jeavons-Fellows continued to work to improve the club.

He masterminded various stages of Stourbridge's development and helped provide the clubhouse that is currently in place at Bridgnorth Road. He was also keen for Stour to have a profile in the national game with his work ensuring Stourbridge became the training venue for England's Grand Slam winning team of 1980.

He also enjoyed roles as a rugby administrator with Worcestershire & Herefordshire and The North Midlands RFU. In 1997 he was also part of the British Lions management team for their tour to South Africa.

The service takes place at St Mary's, Old Swinford, at 2pm on June 2, and afterwards at Stourbridge Rugby Club.

## Aces rally round for hospice fundraiser

CYCLE speedway side Wednesfield Aces are on track for a night of fun and fundraising later this year.

The charity night in aid of Compton Hospice will see 16 riders competing in five heats each in a handicap formula. The big night will be under the floodlights on Friday, September 15 at the club's Ashmore Park venue, hosted by Signal 107DJ Scott Lyons who will call the riders home.

Each participant is expected to raise £50 and there will be a collection bucket and a raffle on the evening. Everyone taking part will take home an award and the overall winner will take home the Steph Clarke Challenge Shield.

Mrs Clarke died in November 2016 at the same time as Wednesfield was enjoying its new Christmas lights – she had been the driving force behind its fundraising. She had been involved in several community projects including the Aces, Hands on Wednesfield and volunteered at the Ashmore Community Centre as well as running photography classes and working full-time as a social media trainer. Steph and her husband James founded the community website ww11.co.uk





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## No strikes here, insists all-rounder

ALL-ROUNDER Chris Woakes sees little reason to fear English cricket may encounter a breakdown in contract negotiations like that afflicting Australia and casting a cloud over next winter's Ashes.

There is no prospect, according to the Great Barr-born player, that any similar strife may be in store in this country.

Woakes reports reassuring relations between the England and Wales Cricket Board and Professional Cricketers' Association, and the consensus among players is that all is well.

That appears to be far from the case Down Under, where Test vice-captain David Warner upped the stakes in the stand-off between Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers' Association by hinting he and his team-mates may consider withdrawing their services before the 2017/18 home series against England, and perhaps seek alternative employment.

But, asked about the possibility of repercussions of Australian disquiet for English players, Woakes said: "It's not on our radar - we are paid very well and looked after by the ECB and the PCA."

"What lies ahead lies ahead, and we'll cross that bridge when we get to it."

Woakes was barely home from a successful maiden Indian Premier League campaign with Kolkata Knight Riders before boarding another plane to join up with his international colleagues on England's pre-Champions Trophy training camp in Spain.

Speaking from there, he said of Warner and co: "It sounds like the players are standing firm for what they believe in. If it gets to the stage where the Ashes are under threat, of course it would be a shame for it to not go ahead."

"It's the pinnacle... but we are concentrating on what comes next."

## Triathletes test their strength at home and abroad

FOUR Black Country triathletes took on the legendary Ironman Lanzarote which comprised a 2.4-mile sea swim, 112-mile bike and a 26.2-mile run. All finished well within the 18-hour cut off time.

In Sankt Wendel, Germany on Sunday, Paul Rogers and Robert Kennard represented Great Britain in the Powerman European Middle Distance Duathlon Championships in the 50-54 age group, with a 10km run, 60km bike then another 10km run. Rogers finished third in age group, collecting a bronze medal.

In Nottingham, all BCT athletes finished in fantastic times in the Outlaw Half, a 1,900m open water swim, 56-mile bike and a 13.1-mile run.

Mark Anslow took on the Slateman Triathlon in Swowdonia, a 1,000m lake swim, a 51km bike ride and an 11km off road trail run. Reece Ashfield was first in age group and seventh overall in the Sprint Triathlon in Southport.

Adults and juniors raced in the Phoenix Sprint Tri at Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, and the Telford Timman Sprint Tri, Super Sprint Tri and Wrekin Aquathlon at Wrekin College.

## Denny up for British challenge fight



Rowley Regis fighter Tyler Denny

UNBEATEN Rowley Regis fighter Tyler Denny will contest the British Challenge middleweight title with Mike Byles next month with the winner likely to land a Midlands title shot.

Denny headlines the pro boxing show called 'Ruthless Rising' at the Venue in Dudley on Friday June 9.

Nicknamed 'Ruthless,' the 25-year-old steps to eight rounds for the first time after coming through six at the same venue last time out,

### Boxing

when he overcame William Warburton on points.

Byles, 29, and boxing out of Coventry, has twice been due to challenge for the area crown against then-champion Craig Cunningham but the fights didn't happen, due to respective injuries.

He'll see the scalp of Denny as a route back to contention and a strap to claim before resuming his hunt

for the now-vacant Midlands honours.

The under-card will provide four-round action for Walsall Wood's Shaun Cooper, aka 'The Scorpion', another hometown hero, 30-year-old 'Minefield' Les Byfield, Brummie Kane Baker and Leicester fighter CJ Challenger.

Tickets are £35 and £50 ringside with waitress service. Call 07976 283 157 or contact any of the home corner boxers on Facebook.

## Walsall spun out despite skipper's 56

A KNOCK of 56 from skipper James Middleton was in vain as Walsall went down by 36 runs to Kenilworth Wardens under the Duckworth/Lewis method in the Birmingham League Premier Division.

Prekant Mankad (68) and Nick Seager (62) helped Wardens to 185-3 in 34 overs, leaving the Gorway outfit chasing 162 to win in 30 overs. They were dismissed for 125 with left-arm spinner Matt Hancock picking up 4-18.

Ed Foster was the all-round hero for Shrewsbury in a 23-run victory over West Bromwich Dartmouth at Sandwell Park. Foster scored 40 in the visitors' 164-7 in a rain-affected match reduced to 35 overs per side. Chasing a revised target of 169 under Duckworth/Lewis, Foster claimed 3-20 and Henry Blofield 4-17 as Dartmouth were all out for 141.

The match between Wolverhampton and Dorridge was abandoned without a ball being bowled, as was the Division One clash between Himley and leaders Smethwick.

Fordhouses maintained their 100 per cent start in Division Two with a one-wicket victory over Harborne. In a match reduced to 27 overs per side, Harborne totalled 136-9, which Fordhouses chased down with five balls to spare.

Ed Kilbee (97 not out) and Hassan Qaumi (40) saw Halesowen to 185-5 in 41 overs at Oswestry, who responded with 186-8 in 40.3 to win by two wickets.

Coventry & NW were 38 run winners at Penkridge after reaching 178-9 in 33 overs and restricting the hosts to 139-7 in 33. Old Elizabethans (208-7) beat Wombourne (149) by 59 runs. Old Hill and Pershore was abandoned.

Needing 137 after a re-calculation in reply to Lichfield's 138, Stourbridge scored 136-7 to tie the game and stay top of Division Three. Streety and Nuneaton was abandoned.

## Whitney hopeful of new additions

WALSALL boss Jon Whitney says he is hopeful of adding at least one player to his squad this week.

The 46-year-old has revealed talks are progressing with a goalkeeper as current No.1 Neil Etheridge is expected to leave the Banks's - and the boss says he is hopeful Walsall can make their first signing of the close season.

"Talks are ongoing but I am hoping we will have some really positive news, he said.

Whitney also revealed one of three triallists he ran the rule over at the club's Essington training base has been invited back for pre-season training.

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The Chronicle, a Midlands News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Katley, Telford.  
Thursday, May 25, 2017

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# NON-LEAGUE SHAKE-UP BID

SEVERAL Midlands football clubs are set to switch divisions as part of the biggest shake-up of non-league football for more than a decade.

The changes, set to be rubber-stamped by the FA, would see clubs including Rushall Olympic, Stourbridge, Hednesford Town and Halesowen Town - who all currently play in the Evo-Stik Northern League at step three of the non-league pyramid - incorporated into a new 'Midland Division' from the start of the 2018/19 campaign.

Chasetown, who play a division below in the Evo-Stik Division One South, would also be affected, along with a host of clubs who currently ply their trade in the step five Midland Premier League, with more promotion places expected to be on offer next term in order to prepare for the most drastic realignment of the non-league game since the introduction of Conference North and South in 2004.

### Feeder

The current structure sees three divisions operate at step three - the Northern League, Southern League and London-based Isthmian League - each with two feeder divisions at the step below.

Under the changes, a fourth division will now be introduced at step three. Though it will operate under the jurisdiction of the Southern League, it is expected to incorporate clubs in the 'Greater Midlands' area.

A further division will also be added at step four, under the control of Isthmian League with the proposals aimed at cutting travelling costs and times for fans, players and officials and encourage more step five clubs to climb the pyramid.

Midlands clubs currently constitute the Northern League's most southern outposts and are almost certain to switch en masse to the new division. The proposals will also see the number of clubs in step three divisions cut from 24 to 22 teams, while the seven divisions in step four will carry 20 teams each once the changes have been introduced. By far the biggest impact will see a

## Martial art students' medal haul



The successful youngsters from Moose Martial Arts Academy

YOUNGSTERS tasted success in a martial arts competition in Walsall.

Children from the Moose Martial Arts Academy, located at the Moose Family Centre on Woodward Street, West Bromwich, competed at the Aiwakai Championships at Walsall College. The team academy youngsters excelled as they picked up 13 medals in total.

Chief instructor Shannon Parsons said: "We got a lot of medals. We had about a month-and-a-half to prepare and we were practising two or

three times a week. The kids are really happy and really confident."

"We should be involved in the CEWKA Championships at Worcester University in July," said Shannon. "Then, along with myself, there are two students - Abbie Mansell and Ruman Rai - awaiting European Championship selection. They take place in Sardinia in October."

Mansell, 14, and Rai, 11, both participated at Walsall College. Mansell picked up a bronze.

drastic effect in the number of clubs being promoted or relegated next season to prepare for the revised structure.

Only one team will drop from each of the existing step three divisions, while a total of 19 clubs will be promoted from step four.

The increased number of promotions will also extend to step five, with a total of 26 promotion places set to be on offer across several divisions,

including the Midland Premier League, which currently houses the likes of Sporting Khalsa, Lye Town and AFC Wulfrunians, among others.

The changes, which have been approved by each league, will now officially be given the green light at the FA's AGM at Wembley today (Thursday), with the finer detail of how the new division's will be incorporated set to be thrashed out later in the summer.

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